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The Myth of Muslim Barbarism

and
its Aims



S. E. Al-Djazairi



This book is dedicated to the memory of all innocent victims of violence, regardless of faith or race.

This book is also dedicated to the good people of all faiths and races who have fought for the sanctity of human life.

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Preface

Reasons for Writing this Book

History teaches us that no people who have been singled out for demonization have avoided physical harm. This book will show plenty of instances of how, once a community is demonized, painted as threatening, barbaric, and inferior, the result has been its subjugation and genocide.

Muslims and Islam have been at the receiving end of the most vitriolic attacks and polemics known in history, and the consequences have been dreadful. From the crusades, through to the colonial era, to our times, this demonizing has always resulted in military invasions of Muslim lands and mass slaying of Muslims. Today, painting the Muslims as the inferior, threatening, and barbaric foes could be used to justify their mass slaughter, just as happened in the past, as history has shown us.

Although genocides are always denounced, once removed from attention and once justified on the ground of the barbarism or inferiority of a community, they happen again and again. The West was supposed to have learnt from the mass persecution and killing of the Jews in the 1930s and 1940s but did not. Decades later, the mass rape and killings of Muslims in Bosnia took place in the midst of ‘civilised Europe,’ on the same grounds, after they had been demonised and after their mass killing was justified intellectually, while the West just stood by and watched.

There is today a substantial Muslim minority in the West. Times are also rife with misunderstandings and mutual distrust. Maintaining the cycle of demonizing Islam and Muslims might, under certain circumstances, lead to a repeat of the same horrific experiences of the past that were suffered by both Muslim and non-Muslim populations which were similarly demonized. The outcomes of any outburst of anti-Islamic hysteria in the West could have devastating effects for us all.

This book is written so as to begin a counter-demonizing campaign. This campaign does not involve using the same debased means as those Western polemicists use against Islam. This would be wrong, and Western society, despite its defects, is a society of great accomplishments and the vast majority of Westerners are decent people, just as good and as

bad as Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Chinese, Africans, and everybody else. If Western society bears deficiencies, and if Western Christendom is not without faults, this is not for this author to judge or pontificate upon. If Westerners are not all good and perfect this is all too normal for human nature. This author is himself too aware of the evil many Muslims, who only bear the name of Muslim, are capable of, or inflict on others, for him to take a naïve stand and speak of the holy and sinless nature of Muslims. The aim of this author is to counter the generalised rhetorical onslaught on his faith and community not only because of the dangers this might lead to, but also because, as a historian and as an academic, it is his duty to do so, however averse he is to taking such a stand, and however uncommitted he is by nature.

The main focus of this work is on the issue of the depiction of the Muslims and their faith as barbarian/barbaric. Whilst much of the rhetoric daily portrays a barbaric side of Islam and Muslims, as this work shows in every chapter, reality completely contradicts this.

This author will use all the power of his arguments and be as blunt as necessary to make the points just stated. In this process, he shows that history tells us that the most barbaric crimes are not the work of the Muslims but of the Christian West, the latter having always used images of others' barbarism to justify its own. Whilst it is necessary to highlight this point to make the argument, this author will avoid dwelling too long on it as it might end in an anti-Western ranting similar to that of the anti-Islamic West. It is, indeed, one thing to defend one's realm, it is another to indulge in rhetorical attacks on the other, just as it is one thing to defend physically one's realm against an attacker, and totally another to initiate a physical attack. Nothing, indeed, justifies rhetorical or physical attacks on any one on a small earth, where rather than fighting, we can and ought to live side by side in our diversity in peace and greater prosperity. Hence this book.

INTRODUCTION

‘The Sword of Islam’, ‘The Islamic Threat,’ ‘The Roots of Muslim Rage,’ ‘The Green Peril,’ Islam’s New Battle-Cry’: in a veritable flood of publications with these and similar titles, various authors seek to explain Islam to us,’ says Lueg,¹ who adds:

‘Simplified and undifferentiated descriptions of Islam in the media fan the flames of vague fears of a supposed threat to Western culture, and create a hostile image of Islam.

For a long time the Islamic Middle East was seen as the polar opposite of the West and the enemy of Christianity.... Hardly anything on the Middle East, or on historical clashes, or points of contact between the East and the West, is learned in schools. Instead of knowledge or at least an unbiased examination of Islamic societies, we have clichés and stereotypes, which apparently make it easier to deal with the phenomenon of Islam. The Western image of Islam is characterised by ideas of aggression and brutality, fanaticism, irrationality, medieval backwardness and antipathy towards women.’²

‘According to many Western commentators,’ Esposito writes,³ ‘Islam and the West are on a collision course. Islam is a triple threat: political, demographic, and socio-religious.’ For some, the nature of the Islamic threat is intensified by the linkage of the political and the demographic. Thus Patrick Buchanan could write that while the West finds itself

‘Negotiating for hostages with Shiite radicals who hate and detest us, ... their Muslim brothers are populating Western countries. The Muslim threat is global in nature as Muslims in

¹ A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam in Western Debate*; in *The Next Threat*; edited by J. Hippler and A. Lueg; (Pluto Press; London; 1995); pp. 7-31; at p. 7.

² Ibid.

³ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat; Myth or Reality?* (Oxford University Press; 1992); p. 175.

Europe, the Soviet Union, and America “proliferate and prosper.”⁴

Other observers, such as Charles Krauthammer, in the midst of the unravelling of the Soviet Union, spoke of a global Islamic uprising, a vision of Muslims in the heartland and on the periphery of the Muslim world rising up in revolt: a ‘new “arc of crisis”... another great movement is going on as well, unnoticed but just as portentous: a global intifada.’⁵

Hippler and Lueg note how:

‘In almost all forms of the media, ‘experts’ seek to enlighten us on the new dangers from the East: holy wars, fanatical masses, the revenge of the Middle Ages on modernity and of religion on the Enlightenment. Islam is sometimes a ‘challenge’, sometimes a threat. The conquest of Vienna by the Turks is apparently once again imminent. With Khomeini, Gaddafi, Saddam Hussein, Arafat and the Algerian fundamentalists, the anti-Western wave is rolling on, at any rate splashing across popular magazines and television screens. The threat might be a spiritual one, an Oriental counter-model to Western civilisation; it might result in stopping the flow of oil, or in a cultural invasion by immigrants from Turkey to the Maghreb. It might lie in the Islamic atom bomb, in terrorism or in a threatened Islamic fundamentalist world revolution in the Iranian mould. Simple minds might even see it as a battle of Islam against Christianity, or against ‘unbelievers.’ In Europe and the USA all these perceptions of threats exist, sometimes side by side and at other times separately. Sometimes they crop up suddenly and compete with each other, and at other times they are systematized and compounded, all depending on what is required or desired in a particular situation.’⁶

To enhance this perception of Muslim threat and Muslim barbarism, there are uninterrupted, highly publicised, arrests and dismantling of ‘Islamist terror plots.’ From one end of the West to the other, not a day passes when we are not told, in the midst of the loudest media uproar,

⁴ P. J. Buchanan: Rising Islam may overwhelm the West; *New Hampshire Sunday News*; August 20; 1989.

⁵ C. Krauthammer: The New Crescent of Crisis: Global Intifada; *Washington Post*; February 16; 1990.

⁶ J. Hippler and A. Lueg: Introduction; in *The Next Threat*; op cit; p. 1.

about Islamic terror networks being dismantled, and multiple arrests, Islamic terror networks, seemingly, proving more powerful than Western states themselves. It matters little if these highly publicised arrests in their near entirety end in releases and acquittals of those arrested: still the constant arrests and discoveries of 'plots' have now created the certainty that all Muslims in the West are guilty of barbaric intentions. Following a recent (2006) dawn raid by crowds of British police, and the arrests of two alleged Muslim 'terrorists' involved in a 'chemical' plot, to the remark by a journalist that the two arrested men were law-abiding citizens, a member of the British government stated that terrorists hide behind the law-abiding veneer.⁷ This helps people conclude that being a law-abiding citizen would not protect a Muslim from being suspected of intending to inflict terrible woes on Western society. In Canada, likewise, the arrest of seventeen alleged terrorists resulted in mass hysteria, with all Muslims deemed a danger to civilised society.⁸

This Western certainty that Islam and Muslims are a threat, and that if any violence is committed it can only be by Muslims, and that the Christians are only victims, is not new, but follows a long-established Western tradition of bombardment of opinion with similar depictions. Thus Vitkus writes:

'The demonisation of the Islamic East is a long and deeply-rooted tradition in the West - spanning the centuries, from the early medieval period to the end of the 20th century. It harks back to ancient representation of Eastern empires and invading hordes that predate Islam, including the Assyrians and the Persians of the Ancient World. The Classical and Biblical stereotypes that were established in the collective consciousness of the West were further sharpened and solidified later by the historical experience of 'Holy War' that began with the rise of Islam, continued during the period of the crusades, and endured during the Spanish Reconquista and Ottoman imperialism. In Western Europe, a long history of military aggression and cultural competition (taking place primarily, but not entirely, in the Mediterranean Basin) served

⁷ Interview on Newsnight BBC2 2 June 06; seen by this author.

⁸ The Independent; 10 June 06; p. 35.

as the basis for the prevailing conception of the Islamic ‘Orient’ during the 16th and 17th centuries.’⁹

In all the depictions, whether past or present, Muslim violence and threat have been associated with the faith itself, Islam. In his book *De L’Islam en general et du monde moderne en particulier*, the French author Jean Claude Barreau writes:

‘What could be described as the “great humiliation”, and what is indeed present in the basic disposition of the Muslims, can be explained by the origins of their religion: it is warlike, conquest-hungry and full of contempt for the unbeliever.’¹⁰

Islam as a whole is presented as the aggressor against the West. It embodies ‘a theology of conquest and victory, but no theology of defeat’.¹¹

According to the American news magazine *Time*,

‘This is the dark side of Islam, which shows its face in violence and terrorism, intended to overthrow modernizing, more secular regimes and harm the Western nations that support them.’¹²

The modern Christian theologian, Kung, writes:

‘The question then, that I would ask Muslims in a religious dialogue is, can we say the same thing about Muhammad? Can he become in the same way a critical corrective, a court of appeals on these matters? Isn’t it true that a Muslim who wishes to use violence in reaching his political/religious goals can invoke Muhammad in general and in particular, even as Marxist Leninist can invoke Marx and Lenin in staging violent and bloody revolutions? On this point, at least, Friederich Durrenmatt is surely right when he notes in his worthwhile essay on the relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam: Muhammad, of course, has nothing in common with Jesus.... But Muhammad can well be compared to Paul and to Karl Marx.’¹³ An important problem arises here, which needs to be discussed: Christians can never honestly invoke Jesus of Nazareth to bless violence,

⁹ D.J. Vitkus: *Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam in 16th and 17th century Europe*; In *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*; D.R. Blanks, and M. Frassetto ed; (St Martin’s Press; New York; 1999); pp. 207-30; at pp. 208-9.

¹⁰ J.C. Barreau: *De l’Islam en General et du monde Moderne en particulier*; (Paris: Belfont le Pres aux Clercs; 1991).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² ‘The Dark Side of Islam’; *Time Magazine*; 4 October 1993; p. 62.

¹³ *Collected Works*, Vol 29, pp. 54 f.

hatred, killing and war - even though this implies and creates a burden of pain for the peacemakers.¹⁴

The possibility that an individual could act in an evil manner regardless of his or her faith has only been applied to non-Muslims. With regard to Muslims, so strong has been the rhetorical linking of Islam to violence that in the Western psyche an individual, by being Muslim, becomes attracted to terror and barbarism. In a fairly recent programme on the BBC, a member of the panel noted how, when children in the UK are asked today "What is a Muslim?" the answer from all was: a terrorist.¹⁵

Of course the propaganda about the Muslim threat and barbarism, as during the past millennium (as this work will amply show) are myths exploited by the West for a multitude of ends. Without a doubt, there are awful, evil Muslims out there. Surely there are also Muslim misdeeds or misdeeds committed in the name of Islam by criminal, senseless, foolish, even mad Muslims, misdeeds which cannot be avoided even in a near perfect world. However, we all know that mass murderers and genocide perpetrators have always existed and even thrived in the Christian West.¹⁶ Yet, due to the endless propaganda about Islamic terror and barbarism, any Muslim crime is over-inflated and ranted about as if it were the greatest genocide ever perpetrated in the history of humanity. Turning on any Western radio or television station, or reading any newspaper or magazine, gives the impression the world is being put to sword and fire, and blood is streaming as the result of the work of bearded Muslim fanatics on the rampage. This is not the case at all, for despite recent outrages targeting civilians, committed in the name of Islam, and all of them unjustifiable regardless of the world political situation, we can see around us that the vast majority of victims of organised terror and violence are Muslims themselves. Moreover, whilst every Muslim misdeed, or any

¹⁴ H. Kung et al: *Christianity and the World Religions*; (Doubleday; London, 1986); p. 93.

¹⁵ BBC 1 Question Time; early 2003, seen by this author.

¹⁶ See, for instance:

-W. Howitt: *Colonisation and Christianity*; (Longman; London; 1838).

D. E. Stannard: *American Holocaust; The Conquest of the New World*; (Oxford University Press; 1992).

misdeed committed in the name of Islam, has become the most ranted about subject in the media, the world has easily forgotten about the terrible genocides committed on Muslims, whether during the colonial era, or the massacres of Palestinians at Sabra and Chatilla in Lebanon in 1982, or during the Bosnian tragedy, or in Chechnya, as well as the terrible woes inflicted on the Palestinians for decades, the bloody invasions of Iraq, Lebanon and Afghanistan, and the tens of thousands of Muslims murdered by dictatorships sponsored by the West. All these and other tragedies are instead dwarfed into oblivion by Western ranting about any crime attached to Muslims. Such ranting about 'Muslim crimes,' the fear, the abhorrence of the Muslim subject they generate, overwhelm our senses daily, and at all times.

This rabid hysteria about Muslim violence and threat is not just over inflated by the propaganda itself but, as Daniel explains:

'Apparently, under the pressure of their sense of danger, whether real or imagined, a deformed image of their enemy's beliefs takes shape in men's minds. By misapprehension and misrepresentation, a notion of the ideas and beliefs of one society can pass into the accepted myths of another society, in a form so distorted that its relation to the original facts is sometimes barely discernible. Doctrines that are the expression of the spiritual outlook of an enemy are interpreted ungenerously and with prejudice, and even the facts are modified - and in good faith - to suit the interpretation. In this way is constituted a body of belief about what another group of people believes. A 'real truth' is identified: this is something that contrasts with what the enemy say they believe; they must not be allowed to speak for themselves. This doctrine about doctrine is widely repeated, and confirmed by repetition in slightly varying forms. The experts, perhaps because being close to the facts is a constant stimulus to their zeal, contribute more to the process, and they are themselves of course wholly convinced by it.'¹⁷

As a result, Muslim barbarism and violence have become so powerfully ingrained in the Western subconscious that it has become the natural, spontaneous, response for the Western psyche to see any crime as committed by Muslims. It is quite revealing that in a recent book on Islam, when referring to the crusaders' capture of the city of

¹⁷ N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; (One World; Oxford; 1993); ed; p. 12.

Jerusalem in 1099 and slaying its entire Muslim and Jewish population, the writer of the caption on this event, instead, writes:

‘The capture of Jerusalem by the crusaders in 1099 was a bloody affair, in which the mostly Christian population was put to the sword.’¹⁸

The image of the Muslim beast is not just the result of a rhetoric that dwells on barbaric violence, it is also reinforced by a similar rhetoric which depicts the Muslim as an inept, inferior, primitive being, just above the animal world. In this regard, whatever the Muslims have accomplished in terms of scientific legacy or civilisation, or contributed to arts and architecture, are suppressed from knowledge one after the other. Western academia in particular and other institutions are engaged in the systematic removal of such accomplishments and their re-attribution to the Christian West through the usual manipulations and distortions of history.¹⁹

Simultaneously, the same academia and associated institutions: media, broadcasting, publications of various sorts, have re-attributed every single crime or horror of the past, old or recent, to the Muslims. This work will abundantly show how even the worst of Western history, such as slave trading, is now being put on the shoulders of the Muslims. What we end up with today is that, courtesy of the powerful image-making apparatus of the West, we have the picture of a terrifying, vile Muslim, contrasted with that figure of humanity and goodness: the Western man.

This twin image of the humane, civilised Westerner and the inferior, barbaric Muslim can, however, only work with Muslim complicity. Muslims, their elites in particular, are criminally incompetent at addressing these issues. Those elites, the ruling elites and others (professors, professionals, doctors, teachers, journalists, business men, etc.), especially amongst those based in the West, who have at least the freedom to express views, are to blame more than the rest. Whilst the onslaught on Muslims is ceaseless, such elites rarely counter it (one is

¹⁸ P. Lunde: *Islam*; (Dorling Kindersley; London; 2002); p. 63.

¹⁹ See S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Hidden Debt to Islamic Civilisation*; (Bayt al-Hikma Press; Manchester; 2005).

not proposing to slander the West back) or stand and defend their heritage, their culture or even defend who they are, rather than the barbaric inferiors, fanatic murderers they are presented as. Only a few such Muslim leaders, including imams of mosques, organise events, inviting Westerners and others (Jews, Hindus, Chinese, Africans...) to exchange ideas and views, and refute the slanders and lies about themselves and their faith. All the competence that most of the Muslim elites muster is to add more to their earthly possessions and aim for higher positions. All they do at every event, instead of promoting their culture and heritage, and fighting slander and negative depictions of Muslims, is to promote themselves and acquire yet more possessions. Muslim silence has meant that they do not counter the verbal onslaught with truth. By their silence, they also acquiesce to what is said of them, and what is said of them becomes accepted as truth. Of course, maybe many such Muslims would seek to respond, but then their ineptness escalates to another level: they do not know how to respond because they lack arguments, historical and other intellectual knowledge. The simple fact is: most Muslims today, including the elites, unlike their medieval predecessors who invented the book and the public library, do not read. Book reading has become anathema to a Muslim world sunk in ignorance, generalised intellectual apathy, and obsession with the material and the shallow. One cannot be an illiterate, never consulting a book, and yet be able to answer arguments satisfactorily, or convince others.

This situation would be harmless if it were not for one terrible lesson from history. Ranting about Islamic barbaric violence for over a millennium, exaggerating instances of Muslim 'barbarism', painting the Muslim as an inferior, all by the use of distortions and viciously violent rhetoric, has in the end led not just to the fabrication of a false image, that of the threatening barbaric Muslim beast; it has also led to the firm belief that the beast must be slain in order for peace and safety to prevail. Although there are other aims behind demonising a group or community, demonising them before and during their mass slaughter has remained the consistent element. As chapters seven and eight of this work show, the depiction of Muslims, as of others, as barbaric-demonic foes, or threatening enemies has always led to their mass killing. No Muslim land (just as others) was invaded until after it had been presented as being dwelt in by barbaric, threatening entities, which justified Western invasions to bring them light and civilisation, but which ended, instead, in the mass killing of their populations. The final chapter of this work will abound with instances showing how this

has been a recurrent pattern in history from the Middle Ages (the crusades) to our very day (Iraq).

Likewise, no minority living within the West, Muslim or other, has escaped mass slaying once it had been painted as an inferior, threatening, enemy within. Of course, on this last point, one is aware of the humane, decent, tolerant nature of Western society in its vast majority. However, one is also aware of the lessons of history, that under a set of circumstances, ruthless minorities can seize the powers to unleash terrible things upon those deemed a threat and inferior. The recent histories of the Jews in Europe (in the 1930s-40s) and the Muslims in Bosnia (1992-95) are all too painfully near us to let us forget the dangers that lurk behind the veneer of civilisation and tolerance.

Hence this work aims, maybe in places too bluntly and too uncompromisingly, to raise the alarm and warn of this scourge dating from the medieval times: the demonising of the Muslims and their faith, and turning them into barbaric, threatening foes.

This book is not concerned with the hostile manner Muslims or Islam have been depicted from the Middle Ages to this day in relation to issues of faith, modernity, etc, which would require the focus of another work. This book's main focus is the association of Muslims with violence and barbarism, the principal foundations for such depictions, and their aims. This is done in eight chapters:

- The first chapter looks at the methodology and techniques used to maintain and enhance the negative perception of the Muslim, especially his 'barbarism.'
- The second chapter looks at the historical continuity: how, from the Middle Ages to this day, the Muslim has been associated with perversion, heresy and violence.
- The third looks at the way the Ottomans were associated with cruelty and barbarism for centuries, down to the twentieth.
- The fourth focuses on 'Muslim intolerance and oppression of others, including women'.
- The fifth chapter looks at how the Muslim has been constantly depicted as a cruel captor, enslaver and racist.

- The sixth chapter analyses how Muslim accomplishments are suppressed from knowledge and the Muslims are painted as primitive creatures prone to animal behaviour, thus enhancing their barbarism.
- The seventh focuses on the crucial point: that is the sharp contrast that exists between the depiction of the Muslim as barbaric and reality, which shows the Muslim as the true victim of barbarism.
- The last chapter considers the aims behind such depictions.

Finally, before the wrong impression can arise, it is necessary to reiterate one crucial fact, that not all Muslims are good, untainted by evil - far from it. There are many evil Muslims just as there are many evil non Muslims, and there are many good non-Muslims just as there are many good Muslims. This work is not concerned with responding to Western attacks by slandering Western society. The negative sides of Western society are of no concern to this author, and serve no purpose to delve into. More importantly, without being perfect, Western society is a good society. It has been a generous society to millions of Muslims who have done very well in its midst. The West has also given us many good things in terms of civilisation and science which have made our lives much more comfortable. There is no need either to dwell on Western crimes, past and present, for unlike Western polemicists who love to generalise one misdeed to the whole community or faith, one is aware that any Western crime is by criminals themselves, or is the result of decisions taken by the ruling elites. The Westerners, as people, are as humane as any other. All this work fights is the exaggeration of evil amongst Muslims, the generalisation of evil to all Muslims, and that every evil Muslim owes such evil to Islam. The two main purposes for this work are:

- Firstly to try to end the mass slaughter of Muslims because of their supposed evil and barbarism as has happened throughout history to this day.
- Secondly, by refuting the demonisation of Muslims, this work starts a campaign, or reinforces such a campaign if one is already in motion, of working towards ending the millennium-old conflict between Islam and the West, a conflict primarily the result of hostility to Islam, and this hostility itself being the fruit of fears based on lies and distortions, and also the fruit of Western incapacity or unwillingness to deviate from the line of hostility adopted since medieval times.

One

THE MANUFACTURE OF THE MUSLIM BEAST

Next to the report on the American massacre of Iraqis in Haditha, the British daily newspaper *The Guardian*,²⁰ in one of its more recent editions, had the following report, titled: ***‘21 Shias and Kurds taken off bus and shot at fake checkpoint.’***

This article went on to say:

‘A group of students on their way to end-of-year exams were among 21 people massacred by gunmen at a bogus checkpoint in Iraq’s restive Diyala province yesterday in one of the most shocking sectarian attacks in the country in recent weeks.

The 12 students who were studying at al-Yarmouk University of Baquba, 40 miles north of Baghdad, were among passengers who were hauled by the gunmen from their convoy of three minibuses early yesterday morning.

According to local police the passengers were separated on the side of the road into Sunni Arabs and non Sunni Arabs. The non-Sunnis, including 19 Shia Turkomen and two Kurds, were then shot. Some tried to escape but were gunned down.

The dead also include several elderly men, police said. One person was wounded. Four Sunni Arab passengers who survived the ordeal were later helping police with their enquiries.

The attack came a day after the police discovered seven heads in banana boxes by the roadside in Baquba, a mixed Sunni-Shia town that has seen an upsurge in violence. Another head, that of a local Sunni cleric, was perched on top of the boxes. A note with the heads said:

‘This is the fate of every traitor. Hell will be his final destination.’

²⁰ By far, with *the Independent*, one of the least hostile to Muslim causes, and one of the least unreadable Western dailies.

Police believe the seven beheaded men were Sunni cousins who worked together driving lorries for foreign contractors...

In other weekend violence, 33 people died in Basra when a suicide bomber attacked a busy local market...

Tensions in the port city worsened yesterday when Sunni religious groups in the city accused the Shia-dominated security forces of killing 12 unarmed worshippers in a mosque in revenge for the bombing...²¹

This report is one of the hundreds coming from Iraq. It is one among thousands of similar reports, which in recent decades have surfaced from the Muslim world, which in some cases, despite it not being the intention of their authors, have still proved one fact above the rest: Muslim barbarism. This article, incidentally, dwarfs into insignificance the report by its side of American atrocities committed on Iraqis, bringing into focus the barbaric side of the Muslims instead. This article, of course, fails to say that for centuries Sunnis and Shias have lived side by side, inter-marrying, and never inflicted on each other such atrocities. The report fails to say that Sunnis and Shias, instead, and in equal measure, have suffered the worst atrocities at the hands of the Westernised, secular elites which have been ruling the Arab world to this day. This article, most of all, fails to raise one crucial question: who really is behind such killings, which are so very well organised and expertly carried out, with their authors never being caught. This article, like all other media reports that cover the horrors of Iraq, often with great delight,²² fails to ask the question, how can such killings take place in front of units of the army itself, killings witnessed by soldiers who refuse to intervene, as reported by the Western media themselves.²³ These expert killings require considerable logistical capabilities and demand much better-organised, managed and structured groups, with the power to mount operations much beyond the capability of the ordinary insurgency which relies mainly on roadside bombs. The latest report by the UN on 21 September 2006 does go a very long way to show, indeed, who are the real authors of

²¹ *The Guardian*, 5 June 06, p. 15.

²² A Western journalist working for one of the biggest news agencies in Iraq reported with unparalleled enthusiasm the supposedly tit-for tat killings amongst Sunnis and Shias on 23 November 06; (seen by this author).

²³ *The Independent* 25 November 06; p. 32.

all the torture, beheadings, and dumping of bodies in waste dumps.²⁴ The responsibility of the security services in these massacres and in acting as the death squads (and bombers when convenient), was further highlighted in mid November 2006 when a mass kidnapping of Sunnis took place, and was traced to these same security services.²⁵

The killings in Iraq do not just serve the aim of removing the unwanted, to decapitate opposition to occupation, and to divide Muslims; their barbaric nature, above all, serves to maintain, stir, and reinforce, the image of the barbaric Muslim, and the threat he poses to civilization, besides, of course, staining the perception of Islam.

This image of the threatening, barbaric Muslim, although with us for a long time, has taken central place since the fall of communism in the late 1980s. Writing and referring to Western media reporting in the early 1990s, Lueg says:²⁶

‘The Western image of the Islamic world is characterised by terrible news items or apocalyptic visions. Everywhere, one hears of militant Muslims, of ‘crazed Islamist zealots’, who draw the ‘sword of Islam’ to assault those of different faiths. There is often talk of an imminent ‘religious war’, now threatening the former Yugoslavia right in the middle of Europe, because Muslims from all over the world would call on their religious brothers to hurry and help out in the Balkans. ‘Soon’, writes the German news magazine *Der Spiegel*, ‘Europe could have a fanatical theocratic state on its doorstep.’²⁷ In films we see hordes of Muslims shaking their fists and screaming anti-Western slogans Muslims are either engaged in fratricidal feuds, in Afghanistan, for example, or direct their aggression against others, principally the West. Even the American magazine the *New Republic* fears the creeping encroachment of Middle Eastern violence: [The bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York] should be occasion to recognize that the violent habits of the Middle East are gradually slipping across our borders.’²⁸

²⁴ See The Independent 22 September pp. 1-2 for brief summary of this report, a report the Independent journalists sought to dilute by adding their own interpretations of events.

²⁵ All media reported this incident which occurred on 14 November 06.

²⁶ A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; pp. 8-9.

²⁷ ‘Unser Marsch hat begonnen; *Der Spiegel*; No 5; 1993; p. 108.

²⁸ ‘The Bomb Threat’, *New Republic*; 29 March 1993; p. 9.

‘The impending confrontation between Islam and the West,’ Esposito likewise says,²⁹ ‘is presented as part of a historical pattern of Muslim belligerency and aggression. Past images of a Christian West turning back the threat of Muslim armies are conjured up and linked to current realities: Charles Martel, who “halted the first Mohammedan advance, preventing the crescent from closing over Christian Europe,” the Crusaders’ attempt to save Jerusalem, and the narrow defeat of “Islamic legions” at Vienna, are linked to current realities and the proclamation, “Now, Islam is again resurgent.” A combination of radicalism and spiraling population growth threatens to overrun East and West: “Clearly, Islam is in the ascent in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. In the West, devout Moslems are having children, while in our secular societies, the philosophy of Planned Parenthood takes hold and the condom is king.’³⁰

This Muslim peril is daily fuelled by countless media reports giving it a concrete, and therefore a more threatening substance. Not a day passes without us being swamped with stories of Muslim terror, cruelties, and violence of every sort. We hear and see images of Muslim misdeeds, whether old or new, played and replayed, and narrated and retold, with such tenor and such grim fortitude, that Muslim violence and barbarism become equal to none, worse than all evils assembled.

Briefly here, picked at random, is a small sample of British media over very short periods. On 4 October 2002, on top of the reports of the trial of the ‘Islamic terrorist,’ who tried to blow up a plane, was the trial of the American who fought for the Taliban; the arrest of another six terrorists in America; and a special report on the 9 o’clock evening news on BBC1 on the woman in Nigeria tried by a shariah court and threatened with stoning to death. Then on BBC 2, on the Newsnight programme, at 10.30, p.m. was a report on the madrasa system in Pakistan, breeding Islamic fanatics and would-be terrorists.

Another day, again at random, Friday 25 October 02, on the news on the BBC, dominating, one subject: Muslim terror. At 6.30: a professor from a British university commenting on the Chechen taking of hostages in a Russian theatre, explains that this expresses Islamic aims to eliminate Christians and Russians from Chechnya. The same day, a ceremony for

²⁹ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; p. 175.

³⁰ P. J. Buchanan: Rising Islam may overwhelm the West; *New Hampshire Sunday News*; August 20; 1989.

Bali (Indonesia) bomb victims was held, a leading Church figure condemning Islamic terrorism, which refuses to fit into 'our modern civilisation.' On BBC1 half an hour before, the Washington snipers, who killed people at random, it was said, were very possibly connected with the 'Islamic terrorist organisation al-Qaida.' Then, a few minutes after, still on the same channel, because a Sudanese man was refused by the Home Office the right to stay in the UK, it was concluded that he was going to be sent back to the Sudan to be enslaved by the Muslims, with a horrific fate awaiting him.

Two years on, another day taken at random, 20 July 04, and the same litany of Muslim barbarism and murder. Muslim terror in Iraq, and its leader: Abu Musa'ab Al-Zarqawi, decapitating and blowing up Iraqi civilians to pieces. On the cover of a newspaper: fanatical Muslim organisations recruiting poor English students, paying them \$10,000 to commit murder.³¹ Also in focus in every newspaper was 'the reactionary, fanatical kingdom of Saudi Arabia,' promoting terror and fundamentalism. On television, the same day, it was the report of genocide and mass rape of Black Africans by the Arab Muslim government of the Sudan.³² On BBC2, it was the report on the Al-Jazeera journalist 'Al-Qaeda terrorist,' and more Muslim terror in Europe.³³ In words, daily, we are bombarded with similar stories from one end of the world to the other, such a sustained bombardment of the minds and senses it would seem the world is a massive sea of blood resulting from Muslim barbaric violence.

To add to this apocalyptic picture, daily, we are also bombarded with more stories of foiled or impeding Muslim outrages, even bloodier. Every moment, in every piece of news, we hear that in all corners of the world, Muslim terror groups are being foiled, with arrests of suspects, dawn raids, seizure of material, explosives... The outrages just foiled, seeming ever more devastating, and the numbers of their would-be perpetrators, just as their deeds and looks, ever more ghoulis in the extreme. Muslim terror, it seems, is now a huge web, a monstrous octopus ready to blow the world apart. And each time we think the Muslim threat has faded, we watch in revulsion more tapes from al-Qaeda, threatening more of the same, and we are treated to images of mayhem and chaos of past and future outrages. In our imagination, in front of our eyes, Muslim terror takes on a stature more

³¹ The Daily Star; 20 July, Front cover.

³² On all British television channels 20 July 04: BBC1 at 6 and 10 p.m.; on ITV at 6.30 and 10.30 p.m.

³³ BBC2; Newsnight; 20 July 04, 10.30 p.m.

powerful, much more devastating, than anything humanity has ever experienced. Then, from 'the hub of Muslim terror,' the Arab world, we hear of reports about the arrest of incalculable numbers of 'terrorists', each bomb plot, seemingly, organised by thousands of people. We look elsewhere to escape this world of chaos, we browse through our books dealing with the East, Islam, the Arab world, the crusades, colonisation, etc, but there again, dominating, overwhelming, are the same stories of Muslim barbarism, piracy, countless cruelties, violence towards women, and repulsive images of Muslim slave traders. Islamic history, taught and written to Muslims and non Muslims alike is only full of massacres of innocents, assassinations, perfidy, the loathing and the loathed, a history where anything Islamic is tainted by the repulsive, a history where the good role is only, and always, taken by the crusaders, Genghis Khan and Hulagu (the Mongol leaders who had millions of Muslims slain), the Church and colonial powers (despite they having slaughtered tens of millions of Muslims between them). The barbaric Muslim is also the slave trader of today selling and persecuting the Black Africans. The genocide perpetrator of today is the Arab African, and the genocide perpetrator of the recent past is the Turk who mass slew the Armenians. The barbaric Muslim is central in novels, in fiction and in television series, as well as in the movies. The barbarism of the Muslim is the dominant feature of modern life. It is impossible today to be a Muslim and not to be a barbaric person. It is impossible today to be a Muslim and not to rouse feelings other than fear and revulsion. Not a day, not an hour passes when the threat of the barbaric Muslim fails to inflict its threatening presence in a world otherwise inhabited by the good, in a world, where, from one end to the other, 99% of the victims of barbarism today are, in fact, Muslims.

If in the minds, in the general perception, in the generalised nightmares of this world, the beast is the Muslim, why is it that on the ground the dead corpse is also that of the Muslim?

Of course, for the Muslim to lie dead on the ground, he has to be a beast in the first place, hence, the filling of minds with his depictions as the monster, and his assimilation with the beast; now thankfully dead. Nothing justifies the considerable numbers of Muslim deaths, the world over, better than the depiction and the rant about Muslim barbarism. The Muslim dead, indeed, are not innocents, whether old, or young, male or female, they either deserve their retribution, or are eliminated for the good of humanity, to save the world from their

threat. It is not a surprise thus that in the 1990s, in Western magazines, media, academia and fiction, the beast was still the Muslim, even if on the same page, reports of Muslim mass slaying in Bosnia, and mass rape of their women were evident. The Serb and Croat scholars and media were well aware of this, when prior to, and during the mass slaughter and mass rape of Muslims, they bombarded opinion with the view that the cleansing of Bosnian Muslims in 1992-5 was a preventive measure to save Western civilisation from Muslim fanaticism and barbarism.³⁴ Prior to, and during this genocide, Serb and Croat academics insisted on the dangers Islam represents. Academics such as Popovic who lectured in Paris wrote to inform the educated public about Islam, seeing in Islam a totalitarian system, one whose totalitarianism far exceeds that which a well-intentioned and informed Western mind could comprehend or imagine.³⁵ Another, Jetvic, warned of the murderous Muslim threat:

‘Islam clearly prescribes that its faithful must bring a victim to Allah. That animal victim is a ram which is slaughtered ritually, so that its blood gushes out all over. If the members of the Islamic civilisation become used from their childhood to seeing how a lamb which is everyone’s favourite animal is slaughtered, then it is clear that a person who partakes in the Islamic worldview becomes clearly accustomed to the shedding of blood in a very brutal fashion. It is not a great step to go from killing animals to killing human beings.’³⁶

Dabic, for his part, warned that in Great Britain, Italy and France, this Muslim threat was shared by all.³⁷ Another, N. Todorov, saw the Muslims in Bosnia as motivated by their ‘Islamic way of life,’ which is alien to European civilisation, warranting its removal.³⁸

The need to eliminate such a totalitarian, strange, and would-be murderous foe, alien to modern Western civilisation, was achieved through mass rape and mass slaughter of a quarter of a million people between 1992 and 1995. Sharing in the Serb and Croat fear of this Islamic infection, the West, with rare exceptions, stood by and watched as the Muslims were systematically exterminated and mass raped.

³⁴ See N. Cigar: Serbia's Orientalists and Islam: Making a genocide intellectually respectable; in *Islamic Quarterly* Vol 38 (1994); pp 147-170; p. 151

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Miroljub Jetvic in Javnost, quoted in Ljudi i vreme (People and Time), *Vreme*; Belgrade; 15 November 1993; p. 55, in N. Cigar: Serbia's Orientalists; op cit; p. 153.

³⁷ Interview with Vojin Dabic: Polumesec muci zapad (The Crescent worries the West), *Evropske Novosti* (New Europe), 14 April 1993, p. 18.

³⁸ N. Cigar: Serbia's Orientalists; op cit; p. 151.

The Serbs and Croats are, however, hardly alone. Any nation, any group with power seeking the mass extermination of Muslims resorts to the same technique of demonising them before and whilst unleashing mass killing on them, with such mass killing presented as a means for cleansing and saving the land.

If we go back in history, this very technique has always been used to demonise the Muslim subjects, first, before wiping them out en masse. Many such instances will be looked at in the final chapter of this work. In Spain, prior to the final mass elimination of Muslims in 1609-1610, the notion of the murderous Muslim endangering Spanish-Christian life was widespread. The Muslims had to be eliminated so as 'to preserve the purity of the Christian land.' And in order to justify their elimination, Muslims were depicted as barbaric criminals whose elimination was necessary for the safety of the country. Here is an excellent passage by De Zayas who shows how 'Muslim crimes' were then exaggerated so as to justify their mass elimination:

'If I say: 'yesterday a man killed another,' it would be assumed that this man, the murderer, could have acted differently, but this is a matter for justice to decide. However, if I say, 'a Norman man beheaded a young, pregnant woman, and showed delight at such killing,' or 'This morning, an Andalusian Muslim murdered an innocent French girl under the horrified eyes of her mother,' everyone would agree that all Normans, or Andalusians, are dreadful people, and that as a matter of emergency, it is necessary to take decisive measures against them. This is precisely what happened in Spain, as extracted from a note sent to the King of Spain, Philippe III, by a certain Martin Gonzales de Cellorigo Oquende, solicitor for the Inquisition of Valladolid. In seeking to demonstrate that the Muslims were murderers of the worst kind, he cited a horrific case:

Andre Alonso, a good Christian, was taking five mules loaded with merchandise on the road of Valladolid to Burgos. He was attacked, robbed, decapitated, and his remains put in a bag. His head was never found, nor were ever recovered his mules, or merchandise. As at the time no corpse could be identified, that body could have been that of any person. The murderers were never found, but this hardly restrained our Inquisitor from using this incident and inflammatory rhetoric much reminiscent of today's media: this crime could only have been

the work of the Moors, barbaric murderers infesting the highways; proof that it is necessary to put an end to their killings of the Followers of Truth (i.e. the Christians); these Moors giving free rein to their murderous deeds.'

This technique (of using one horrific crime, committed (or not) by Muslims, and to generalise it to the whole community, to justify harsh measures against them,) De Zayas concludes, is of course aged today, but 'it still serves its purpose.'³⁹

The image of Muslim violence and barbarism serves multiple other purposes, including the physical elimination of Muslim elites. Indeed, the existence of 'barbaric,' extremist Islamic 'terror' groups, is the best means to explain, legitimise and justify the mass elimination of Muslim elites and able individuals. This follows a most basic and yet highly effective method. Pseudo-Islamic terror groups (i.e. secret state agency death squads) are set up. These pseudo-terrorist groups create outrages, which both give practical instances of terror, and which justify 'Counter-Terror Measures.' In the cycle of 'terror and counter terror,' Muslim elites are physically eliminated; those amongst such elites with intellectual and religious standing are murdered by the 'terrorists' (who accuse them of being moderate or traitors), whilst young Muslim activists are killed as terrorists.

And so one understands fully and very well the reasons behind reports such as that above from Iraq, which at the same time conceal the cleansing of Muslim elites by state-sponsored death squads,⁴⁰ divide Muslims into Sunnis and Shias mass-murdering each other, and stir ever more the image of the barbaric Muslim.

Many more aims behind the depictions of Muslim barbarism will be seen in the last chapter of this work. The substance and the shapes Muslim barbarism has taken in history, in recent times, and today, will be also considered throughout this work. The way Muslim barbarism is concocted out of hostility, and the distorting machine of negative image-making will also receive abundant focus. In the rest of this

³⁹ R. de Zayas: *Les Morisques et le racisme d'etat*; (Ed Les Voies du Sud; Paris, 1992); pp. 282-3.

⁴⁰ On 14 November 06, the whole Sunni staff of a ministry was abducted en masse by state special forces and taken to an undeclared destination. The fate of those abducted like this is to end up with mutilated bodies, dumped in rubbish tips. See also The Times online - January 10 2005 (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/iraq/article410491.ece>)

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chapter, however, the focus will be on the techniques used by the West to shape the image of the barbaric Muslim. These include the use of repetitions, exaggerations and lies in relation to Muslim 'crimes;' the systematic recourse to academia to give scholarly legitimacy to the image of Muslim barbarism, and the use of images to enhance the 'monstrous' side of Muslims.

1. Uninterrupted anti-Muslim Propaganda, Exaggerations, and Distortions

Daniel writes:

‘The earliest Christian reactions to Islam were much the same as they have been until quite recently. The tradition has been continuous and it is still alive. Naturally there has been variety within the wider unity of the tradition and the European and the (American) West has long had its own characteristic view, which was formed in the two centuries or so after 1100, and which has been modified only slowly since. One chief reason for continuity has been not only the normal passage of ideas from one author to the next, but the constant nature of the problem. The points in which Christianity and Islam differ have not changed, so that Christians have always tended to make the same criticisms; and even when, in relatively modern times, some authors have self-consciously tried to emancipate themselves from Christian attitudes, they have not generally been as successful as they thought.’⁴¹

The hostile depictions of Islam and Muslims, formed in the Middle Ages against the background of the crusades, have persisted for more than a millennium, and have also remained fanned by distortions. According to Rodinson, Western depictions of Islam ‘for the most part, contemptuous and uncomprehending,’ have continued basically unchanged since the Middle Ages.⁴² For over fourteen centuries now, Scott observes, no religion has suffered more than Islam.⁴³ ‘Nobody is afraid of Buddhism or Hinduism; vis a vis Islam, however, fear is the normal attitude,’ points out Van Ess; and it does not date just from the oil crisis and the Islamic revolution, but again, travels back to the Middle Ages, and remains constant at all epochs.⁴⁴ ‘Imagination and fear,’ Scott observes:

⁴¹ N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; op cit; p. 11.

⁴² M. Rodinson: *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*, tr by R. Veinus; (I.B. Tauris and Co Ltd; London; 1988); p. 35.

⁴³ S.P. Scott: *History of the Moorish Empire in Europe*; 3 vols; (J.B. Lippincott Company, 1904); vol: 3; p.58.

⁴⁴ J. Van Ess: Islamic perspectives, in H. Kung et. al: *Christianity and the World Religions*; op cit; p. 5.

‘Painted the Saracens as a race of incarnate fiends, whose aspect was far more frightful, whose atrocities were far more ruthless, than those of the Huns who had been routed by Aetius four hundred years before on the plains of Chalons. The lapse of twelve centuries has not sufficed to dispel this superstitious dread, and the Saracen, as a monster and a burglar, still figures in the nursery tales and rhymes of Central France.’⁴⁵

As Lueg points out:

‘Instead of serious analyses, [they] are given to psychologising or to painting crude images of the Islamic world along racist lines. Certainly, not all elements of the stereotyped fear of the Islamic threat have been invented unaided. In Islamic societies examples of aggression, repression, fanaticism and so on are indeed to be found. But our perception of Islam as ‘the enemy’ still has little to do with reality, because only certain aspects of reality are used to cement our clichéd image.’⁴⁶

Esposito also writes:

‘A selective presentation and analysis of Islam and events in the Muslim world by prominent scholars and political commentators too often inform articles and editorials on the Muslim world. This selective analysis fails to tell the whole story, to provide the full context for Muslim attitudes, events, and actions, or fails to account for the diversity of Muslim practice. While it sheds some light, it is a partial light that obscures or distorts the full picture. As a result, Islam and Islamic revivalism are easily reduced to stereotypes of Islam against the West, Islam’s war with modernity, or Muslim rage, extremism, fanaticism, terrorism. The “f” and “t” words, “fundamentalism” and “terrorism,” have become linked in the minds of many. Selective and therefore biased analysis adds to our ignorance rather than our knowledge, narrows our perspective rather than broadening our understanding, reinforces the problem rather than opening the way to new solutions.’⁴⁷

This relentless onslaught on Muslims and their faith, fuelled and fed by distortions, and spawning the worst of fears has also been amply noted

⁴⁵ S. P. Scott: *History of the Moorish Empire*; op cit; Vol 3; p. 334.

⁴⁶ A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; p. 8.

⁴⁷ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; p. 173.

by Tolan,⁴⁸ Sardar and Davies,⁴⁹ Southern,⁵⁰ and others.⁵¹ ‘The disgrace of the Christians,’ Daniel holds:

‘Was to attack Islam for so many reasons.... In this area we can only say that Europeans have on the whole maintained towards the Arabs a constant reserve which seems to run consistently through the whole medieval period up to the present day.’⁵²

Smith notes how nearly all who had approached Islam did so only to vilify and misrepresent it, writing from preconceived positions.⁵³ A dark picture was painted of Islam to contrast with the light self-image of Christianity and every crime imaginable was popularly associated with the faith, Smith adds.⁵⁴

These ten centuries or so of Western obsession with demonising Muslims and in generating both fear and loathing of them has remained unique in history. No other civilisation or culture has made the systematic onslaught on Islam and turning Muslims into monsters its *raison d'être* as much as Western culture has done. That the power of the Christian West to rant against Islam and Muslims, its undiminished fervour to demonise and make all Muslims guilty of evil, every day renewed with fierce passion, has become an art, a science, and an essential foundation of Western culture, is beyond the capability of Muslims to comprehend. It is not in Islam where one finds a whole network of academia, the media, fiction writers, film makers, opinion makers, political figures, various other elites, and religious figures and organisations, studying, and ranting, daily about the evil of the others, and thus legitimising ways to cause strife amidst the various sects and religious and ethnic groups of Christians. The imam's duty is to dispense prayers, explain the Qur'an or the Hadith (the Prophet's tradition) to people, whether Muslims or not, perform the odd ceremony, and then spend time earning a living for his family in a restaurant, or teaching, or selling vegetables. The Muslim scholar does more or less the same in his or her own function. Never will Muslims, especially the learned, spend their lives demonising members

⁴⁸ J. V. Tolan. Ed: *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam* (Routledge; London; 1996).

⁴⁹ Z. Sardar, M-W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; (Grey Seal Books; London, 1990).

⁵⁰ In R.W. Southern: *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*, (Harvard University Press, 1978).

⁵¹ D.R. Blanks, and M. Frassetto *Western Views of Islam*; op cit.

N. Daniel: *The Arabs and Medieval Europe*; (Longman Librarie du Liban; 1975).

⁵² N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit; p.319.

⁵³ R.B. Smith: *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*; (London; 1874); 1st ed; p. ix.

⁵⁴ In C. Bennett: *Victorian Images of Islam*; (Grey Seal; London; 1992); p. 77.

of other faiths so as to prevail over them. It is not the obsession of any group of Muslims to devote their careers to searching for dark episodes in Western Christendom to capitalise on them. No Muslim historian ever dwells on the past crimes of the Christian West in an effort to darken Western Christians. One, in fact, refers to such pages with utmost reluctance and just out of necessity to throw light on some episodes of history, or make an argument, and then leaves the subject altogether. Muslims never dwell on recent Christian genocides of Muslims, whether at Sabra and Chatilla, or in Bosnia, or in Algeria (1830-1962). A Muslim's aim is always to look to the future and abide by the firm belief that, as humans, we are all equal in capacity for good and evil.

The same cannot be said of the vast majority of Western commentators, elites, political and others, writers, academia, film makers, etc, who for centuries have sought by all means to undermine Islam and Muslims. Their task has consisted in creating and in exaggerating the negative sides of Muslims, Muslim history, past and recent, and their faith, generally through distortions, and endlessly ranting about them. This process has gone on for centuries, and thousands upon thousands, possibly millions even, of books, magazines, stories, pamphlets, publications of other sorts, discourses, sermons, declarations, films, etc, are witness to this relentless Western campaign to paint Muslims and their faith as monstrous fiends.⁵⁵ Not a single derogatory depiction of Muslims and their faith has escaped the Western mind. Chapter Two of this work will give a succinct appraisal of this ten-century or so old bombardment, which could, if one sought to give it attention, turn into one of the most voluminous works ever completed. This relentless bombardment of opinion, past and present, picks on any incident, rumour, misdeed, story, real or false, or just on fear associated with Muslims, and amplifies them until the misdeed or crime becomes the worst of all misdeeds or crimes. This, having been done for more than ten centuries and still going on unabated today, forces any person considering the issue to conclude that Western culture cannot live without its demonic Muslim or Islam, and that the

⁵⁵ For just a brief idea of what has been written (negatively) about Islam and Muslims, consult works such as the following, and their bibliographies and references:

C. Bennett: *Victorian Images of Islam*; op cit.

Denise Brahimi: *Opinions et regards des Europeens sur le Maghreb aux 17em et 18em siecles*; (SNED; Algiers; 1978).

N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; op cit.

D. Metlitzki: *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England*; (New Haven; 1977).

Western media would not be able to function without the daily dose of anti Islamic/Muslim propaganda.

What makes this propaganda even more dramatic in its impact in painting an image of a ghoulish Muslim is the fact that, at the same time as they are demonizing Muslims, Western depictions suppress anything good about Islam and Muslims. Hardly do we ever hear or read about the Muslim contribution to modern sciences, for instance. Serres, writing on the history of scientific thought, says that:

‘In turning left towards the West we have chosen to neglect the history of the Orient on the right.’⁵⁶

‘The debt of Europe to the ‘heathen dog,’ says Briffault, could, of course, ‘find no place in the scheme of Christian history, and the garbled falsification has imposed itself on all subsequent conceptions.’⁵⁷ ‘The history of the rebirth of Europe from barbarism,’ he adds, ‘is constantly being written without any reference whatsoever, except to mention ‘the triumphs of the Cross over the Crescent,’ and ‘the reclamation of Spain from the Moorish yoke,” to the influence of Arab civilisation - the history of the Prince of Denmark without Hamlet.’⁵⁸ Equally, Draper speaks of:

‘The systematic manner in which the literature of Europe has contrived to put out of sight our scientific obligations to the Muhammadans...’⁵⁹

This hostility to Islam has shaped negatively all forms of writing relating to it, at all ages, and to our day.⁶⁰ Thus suppressed from general knowledge are the law-abiding nature of Muslims, their business enterprise, their neat interiors, their avoidance of alcohol, their sense of community, the central role of the family, their care for others, the tolerance of Muslim societies that have protected Christian and Jewish minorities in their midst for over ten centuries (unlike Western Christendom which has wiped out its Muslim minorities through the centuries), etc. ‘A “selective” presentation and analysis of Islam and events by prominent scholars and political commentators too often informs articles and editorials on the Muslim world,’ admits John Esposito, Director of the Centre for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University in Washington. ‘This selective analysis fails

⁵⁶ M. Serres: *A History of Scientific Thought*; (Blackwell, 1995); p.7.

⁵⁷ R. Briffault: *The Making of Humanity*, (George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1928), p., 189.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ J.W. Draper: *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*; 2 vols; (George Bell and Sons, London, 1875). Vol 2; p. 42.

⁶⁰ A. Thomson: *Barbary and Enlightenment*: (Brill; Leiden; 1987); pp 37-8.

to tell the whole story. ... While it sheds some light, it is partial light that obscures and distorts the full picture.'⁶¹

To sum up, in this respect, the bulk of Western writing on Islam has primarily consisted of removing and obliterating the positive and favourable facts of Islamic history, and re-attributing them to the West. Then, this same writing has suppressed all the negative from the history of the West so as to re-attribute it to Islam. Thus, everything positive in Islamic history, such as the rise of modern sciences, or gardening, or architectural innovations, tolerance, etc, gradually, little by little, has been suppressed from Islamic history, and been attributed to the West. Then, on the other hand, everything, from the burning of dissidents, to enslavement of Africans, to genocides of other people, piracy etc, have been wiped out of the Western 'heritage,' and have all instead been attributed to the Muslims. All subsequent chapters cover this major substitution effected by Western historians, broadcasters and opinion makers, helped by the corrupt and criminal incompetence of Muslims, especially their rulers and their elites (with few exceptions), a substitution which has ended in enhancing the image of the barbaric Muslim, contrasting with that of the humane, civilised, good Westerner.

This major transformation of reality is not just the result of the remarkable abilities of both Western media and academia to alter decisively perceptions of reality, aided in this by the corruption of Muslim elites and their incompetence, it also owes to the particular power of propaganda, i.e. the mere repetition of the same depictions of Muslim barbarism throughout time, and at all levels of Western culture. The uninterrupted propaganda about the monstrous Muslim and the suppression of anything favourable about Muslims has created this image of the Muslim as a barbaric entity, and barbaric only. As Daniel, in particular, has correctly noted:

'The Christian canon of Muslim behaviour, that is, the received Christian opinion as to what Muslims actually did, was partly formed by the tendency of misconceptions to snowball, and to confirm as well as to add to one another. Mere repetition is enough to bring unshakable conviction.'⁶²

⁶¹ J.L. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*, op cit; p. 173.

⁶² N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*, op cit; p. 270.

The Myth of Muslim Barbarism -- and its Aims

The following instances show how propaganda about Muslim evil in all its shapes and forms has managed to create a monstrous image of Muslims, that is fundamentally contradicted by reality.

2. Western Propaganda about Muslim Barbarism, and Reality

Chapter Seven will amply show how the relentless rhetoric associating Muslims and Islam with barbarism and violence is wholly contradicted by reality. This profound contradiction is briefly outlined here.

The endless repetition of the monstrous side of the Muslim affects all forms of communications. A whole treatise can, indeed, be devoted to Western portrayal of Muslims, all derogatory, only varying in form in the thousands of extracts in dailies, broadcasts, political or academic discourse, and publications of all sorts. The French media's description of Algerians alone will fill a multi-volume work. It hardly matters whether the person is Muslim through religious conviction or just by mere accident of birth, his physical features: moustache, curly hair, darker skin, etc, work against him. His beard adds an element of fear. And even if the face happens to be without moustache or beard, with fair hair, and blue eyes, still his name, his voice, any sort of link with Islam taints him. In the cinema and on television, with the exception of the Muslim ally of the Westerner, who is the only good Muslim, the other Muslims are always evil, repulsive characters. In a recent police drama: *Spooks*, broadcast on 9 June 03, on the BBC, the Muslims are shown as generally portrayed on Western television, about to blow up a school. The chief evil figure is the Imam. He is loathsome in looks and manners, the usual ghoulish traits about his face: goggled eyes, repulsive expression and beard, thick lips, slimy manners, etc. He brainwashes a young teenager into carrying a suicide bomb attack against a multi-ethnic primary school. The hero is also Muslim. He is working for British intelligence, and he infiltrates the group of fanatics (all repulsive in looks), and eventually sacrifices his life to save the school.⁶³

Another programme, in 2004, and the same 'Muslim terror,' and the same repulsive Muslim characters battled by smart, pretty looking Westerners. The Saudis are shown to be the most repulsive of all, sponsors of terror, corrupt, slimy, and fanatical.⁶⁴

⁶³ BBC1: *Spooks*; 9 June 03; 9-10 p.m.

⁶⁴ BBC2: *The Grid*: 7-9 September 04, 9.00-10.30.p.m.

Hardly a day passes when Muslims are not reminded of who they are, limb cutters, suicide bombers, and women oppressors; a right to depict Muslims as such even backed by a minister on Question Time.⁶⁵ To ascertain this fundamental truth, the Muslim misdeed is always the worst misdeed of all. Thus in September 2003, when a Kurdish man was tried for killing his daughter, his case was the worst case of patricide in generations. Equally, in the same period, when a Kenyan Muslim infected his two mistresses with AIDS, he was the worst culprit of the sort in the history of the disease. As for Muslim involvement in any outrage, proved or not, it is the worst genocide in the history of humanity. The truly barbaric hostage taking in a school in Beslan, southern Russia, in early September 04, and its horrific end, in the view of Western media, was the worst crime ever perpetrated. As late as November 04, its horrors and 'Muslim barbarism' filled the pages of Western dailies, the graphic and morbid details enhanced, and repeated, daily. And from that date to late 06, literally not a single day has passed without the media not being adorned with one story or another speaking, or warning of Muslim barbarism, threat or violence.

What is remarkable in the reports on Muslim barbarism is the sudden ineptness of the Western and other allied media (helped, it must be said, by the generalised cowardly, corrupt silence of the Muslim elites) to question the veracity of reports, of who truly is behind the many barbaric deeds attributed to the Muslims. It is remarkable when reading about Muslim contributions to civilisation, for instance, one comes across the sharp inquisitiveness of the Western media and academia, how they seize on any little piece of evidence to deny any Muslim contribution to modern sciences and civilisation.⁶⁶ Yet, when it comes to assigning crimes and barbarism to Muslims, every single commentator, writer, reporter, and analyst loses their critical judgment and straightaway attributes the crime to the Muslims. It hardly matters that such crimes make no sense at all, generally the victims of 'Muslim fanatics' being their supporters themselves. It hardly matters if these crimes work against Muslim causes and the perception of their faith, the massacres of children in schools, and decapitation of their teachers being a favourite deed of such criminals. It hardly matters that such crimes, such as the supposed sectarian killings in Iraq, take place between the groups opposed to occupation. It hardly matters that 'Muslim fanatics' murder the brightest

⁶⁵ UK Labour Minister at Question Time on Thursday 15 January 04; BBC1; 10.30 p.m.

⁶⁶ See sources referring to this denial in S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Hidden Debt to Islamic Civilisation*; Bayt al-Hikma; Manchester; 2005.

and best Muslim intellectuals and elites, religious and others. It hardly matters that these 'fanatics' also murder the relatives and families of those who fight for Muslim causes. It hardly matters that everyone is aware how easy it is for any state secret agency to mass murder, decapitate, maim, commit all sorts of horrors, and then attribute the deeds to Muslim 'terrorists'. It hardly matters if some decent secret service men who know the truth tell it as it is, absolving the Muslims from crimes attributed to them, and generally end up murdered.⁶⁷ It hardly matters if journalists who conduct enquiries about the authors of atrocities attributed to Muslims (such as the Beslan massacre) end up murdered.⁶⁸ It hardly matters that outrages attributed to Muslims take place in front of the army, with the support of the government, and of the state secret agencies.⁶⁹ It hardly matters that those slaughtered in barbaric fashion with butchers' knives, their horrific end filmed and shown to the world, are decent, ordinary Muslim or Western people. None of this or much else matters. The media, the writers on Islam, the opinion makers, etc, so much blighted by their hate for that faith and its adherents, and of course comfortable in their cosy, corrupt, cowardly life, would care very little. Corrupt, amoral consciences never react to human suffering. The countless reports of mutilated Muslim bodies dumped like rubbish are instances to highlight the fundamentally corrupt and repellent nature of a culture, which not only depicts Muslim horrors with utmost indifference and uses them for its own ends, but also goes as far as attributing the horrors to the victims themselves and absolving the real mass murderers; a culture whose members are thus accomplices in mass murder.

The daily rant about Muslim barbarism conflicting with reality is well caught by one of the rare voices of decency in the media, Robert Fisk, in one of his latest columns as in these extracts:

'Every time I enter the United States, I wonder what the lads in Homeland Security have in store for me. But last week, Chicago was a piece of cake. I was arriving from Lebanon, I told the young man at the desk, and I was to address a Muslim conference....

The largely Sunni congregation of 32,000 gathered for the Islamic Society of North America's annual gig were not the hot

⁶⁷ See, for instance, what Alexander Litvinenko who was murdered in November 06 says about who truly bombed Moscow in 2003, a crime attributed to Chechen Muslims.

⁶⁸ The Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya was killed outside her flat on 7 October 2006.

⁶⁹ See *The Independent* 25 November 06; p. 32.

dog sellers, bellhops, and taxi drivers of New York. They were part of the back-bone of Middle America, corporate lawyers, real estate developers, construction engineers, and owners of chain store outlets....

When I told them that as American Muslims, they could demand a right of reply when lobby groups maliciously claimed that a network of suicide bombers was plotting within their totally law-abiding community, they roared. But I warned that I would listen carefully to their response to my next sentence. And then I said that they must feel free to condemn - and should condemn - the Muslim regimes that used torture and oppression, even if these dictators lived in the lands from which their families came. And those thousands of Muslims rose to their feet and clapped and yelled their agreement with more emotion and fervour than any rabble-rousing non-Muslim yelling about 'Arab terrorism.'

Signing copies of the American edition of my book on the Middle East some hours later, these same people came to me...

One young man had written out a short sentence for me to inscribe in the front of his copy of my book: 'To my parents and siblings who perished in the hands of the Pol Pot Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. Yousos.' I looked up to find the young man crying. 'I am against war, you see,' he said, and vanished into the crowd.... Then, there was the young man with Asiatic features who said softly that he was 'Mr Yee, the 'Guantanamo imam,' who turned out to be the same Mr Yee foully and falsely accused by the US authorities of passing Al-Qaida-type messages while ministering to the prisoners of Al-Qaida at America's most luxurious prison camps. But there was no bitterness among any of these people. Only a kind of growling pain at the way the press and television in America continued to paint them - and all other Muslims in the world - as an alien, cruel, sadistic race...

And I could not help noticing the degree to which the New York Times' Thomas Friedman is stoking the fires. This is the same man, an old friend, who wrote a few years ago that the Palestinians believed in 'child sacrifice' because they allowed their kids to throw stones at Israeli soldiers who then obligingly gunned them down. Most egregiously for the Muslims I spoke to, Friedman was now 'animalising', as one girl put it beautifully, the Iraqis and she presented me with a Friedman's clipping which ended with these words: 'it will be a global tragedy if they (the insurgents in Iraq) succeeded, but... the US government can't keep asking Americans to sacrifice their

children for people who hate each other more than they love their children.'

So here we go again, I thought, Muslims sacrifice their children. Muslims feel hate more than they love their children. No wonder, I suppose, that their kids keep getting Israeli bullets through their hearts in Gaza, and American bullets through their hearts in Iraq and Israeli bombs smashing them to death in Lebanon. It's all the Arabs' fault. And yet here in Chicago were 32,000 Muslims dismissing all the calumnies and sophistries and lies and saying they were proud to be Americans.⁷⁰

The image of Muslim barbarism, based on lies and distortions that one finds in the media daily is also central in drama on television or in the cinema, as seen already, or in fiction and book narratives of any sort, as will also be amply shown throughout this work, and as can be briefly looked at here. Written fiction and narrative always meticulously insist and dwell on the barbaric side of the Muslim, one theme picked here being Muslim cruelty to defenceless animals. Here is Elias Canetti's⁷¹ account of what he saw in the market of Marrakech, how 'the vile Moroccan' treats his animal, the camel:

'Of the two or three other people busying themselves at the animal's (the camel) head one stood out particularly: a powerful stocky man with a dark cruel face.... With brisk movements of his arm he was drawing a rope through a hole he had bored in the animal's septum. Nose and rope were red with blood. The camel flinched and shrieked, now and then uttering a great roar; finally, it leaped to its feet again, having by now knelt down, and tried to tug itself free, while the man pulled the rope tighter and tighter.'⁷²

The camel is the victim of inhuman treatment by the Moroccan. The Moroccan's cruelty is ingrained in his innate being, and his very gross facial features. The roles are reversed, in fact; the Muslim is bestial, and his beast is human; exactly fitting the traditional view of the Oriental as despot, cruel being and violent captor; the least bothered by blood or by suffering.⁷³

Canetti returns to the theme of suffering animals, a victim: the donkey, harassed by one man while a crowd of others look on. They were all

⁷⁰ R. Fisk: How Middle America made me feel safer; *The Independent* 9 September 2006; p. 41.

⁷¹ E. Canetti: *The Voices of Marrakesh*; (London; 1982); p.9.

⁷² *Ibid*; p.15.

⁷³ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; (Pandora; London; 1994); p. 124.

standing. The dark shadows on faces and figures, edged by the harsh light thrown on them by the lamps, gave them a cruel sinister look.⁷⁴ And the donkey?

‘Of all the city’s miserable donkeys, this was the most pitiful. His bones stuck out, he was completely starved, his coat was worn off, and he was clearly no longer capable of bearing the least little burden. One wondered how his legs still held him up... The music played on and on and the men, who now never stopped laughing, had the look of man-eating or donkey-eating savages.’⁷⁵

Of course Canetti, just like the countless Westerners who dwell on Muslim cruelties to animals fail to tell us that it was the Christian West which in the past, just as today, is working to literally wipe out all creatures from lands and seas. Whether with regard to the extinction of lions in North Africa, rare species in Oceania, the bison population in North America, the fish stocks in the seas and oceans, and much else, all these are the works of Westerners.

The notion that Muslim society is cruel to animals is also a fallacy. Islamic society cared not just for nature and the environment, but following the same Islamic principles, its care extended to animals. Tradition (hadith) tells us two stories:

One woman goes to hell because she allowed a cat to die of hunger. Another person coming across a dog dying of thirst goes down the well, and with great suffering brings water up to quench its thirst. God forgave her sins.⁷⁶

In Muslim Tradition: when a Muslim plants or sows something, and an animal or bird feeds itself from this, this is a charity in the eyes of God.⁷⁷ The Prophet (PBUH) forbade tying an animal and using it as a target. Cutting an animal’s feet muscles or leaving an animal tied to die are equally forbidden by him. The Prophet cursed whoever mutilated an animal, or anyone who left marks on the face of an animal, and also forbade hitting animals on the face. In Al-Bukhari, it is reported that the Prophet himself wiped with his own cloth the face of his horse, and that a good deed is recorded for anyone who gives a grain of barley to

⁷⁴ E. Canetti: *The Voices of Marrakech*, op cit; p. 88.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ In C. H. Bousquet: *Des Animaux et de leur Traitement selon le Judaïsme, le Christianisme, et l'Islam*; in *Studia Islamica*; Vol 9; 1958; pp 31-48; at p. 40.

⁷⁷ Muslim tradition includes many hadiths in this respect. See *Handbook of Wensinck*; v: animals;

a horse. It is also forbidden to separate a beast from its progeny or to burn a nest of ants without an adequate reason.⁷⁸

Caliph Omar, most particularly, used to be particularly compassionate towards animals. He used to beat people who overloaded animals. He used to hide from view in order to catch those who mistreated their beasts, and punish them. He passed his hand on the wound of the camel to heal the beast, saying: 'I fear God may seek retribution from me for the pain you suffer.'⁷⁹

The Muslim law recommends avoiding every form of cruelty towards animals, especially when it comes to their ritual slaughter. For instance, it is highly stressed that a knife should never be sharpened in front of the beast, and that no beast should ever be killed in front of others. Any person observing these rules will find reward in paradise.⁸⁰

In medieval times, says Le Bon, the Land of Islam was

'A paradise for animals. Dogs, cats, birds, and all species of the animal world, were universally cared for. Birds flew freely inside mosques, and even built their nests in their vicinity. Wild birds crossed the fields without ever being disturbed. Never would a child attack a bird's nest. I was told that in Cairo, and the fact has been checked by many authors, there exists a mosque where cats, at a certain hour of the day, came to fetch their food, that a charitable hand had gifted them from countless time. It is from these small details that we can judge the morality of a nation and its people. It shows the kindness and urbanity the Westerner will learn from the oriental.'⁸¹

The image of Muslim barbarism is not just promoted by lies and fallacies but also by what Fisher calls altering the real importance of events by degrees of emphasis, by making a short story long, or a long story longer than it ought to be.⁸² Thus, important, crucial events are much trivialized, or quickly buried, and conversely, one single event with hardly any bearing, but because apt to be used to highlight Muslim barbarism can be stretched considerably. Thus, whilst there is hardly, if ever, any reference to the crimes of the West, past or present, it is instead Muslim barbarism which occupies the front of the news by the enormous amplification of

⁷⁸ C. H. Bousquet: *Des Animaux et de leur Traitement*; op cit; p. 42.

⁷⁹ Ibid; p. 45.

⁸⁰ Ibid; p. 43.

⁸¹ G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation des Arabes*; (Syracuse; 1884); p. 280.

⁸² D.H. Fischer: *Historians' Fallacies*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971); pp.149-50.

any incident involving Muslims. The Islamic misdeed is excessively publicised, made into an object of both revulsion and focus; broadcast all day, all the time, and poignantly, with reliance on emotive language, pictures, and anti-Islamic raw emotions in full play. If on the other hand, the victims are Muslims, then the facts are either suppressed from the news or scantily noted and de-dramatised as much as possible. Many instances can be cited in this respect, such as the fairly recent (Autumn of 2004) murder of a British man, Ken Bigley in Iraq (an abhorrent act just like the killing of any other person, including the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis), which was turned into the most barbaric deed of all, taking the front of all news and media broadcast, for weeks, whilst the American destruction of a city of 300,000 people, Felloujah, and the mass slaughter of thousands of its people, was hardly noted, and if and when done, was only deemed 'a disproportionate answer to Muslim terror'. A very recent instance, also related to Iraq, is the near total suppression from the news of the number of Iraqi victims of the war (650,000),⁸³ and focus instead placed on the Muslim women wearing the *niqab* (the veil that covers a woman's face).

An earlier similar instance is that of the Taliban's execution of a woman for the murder of her husband in 2001. To equate the regime with medieval barbarism and justify the invasion of the country, Western television broadcast and re-played the same scene of execution countless times, thus, creating the image of the Taliban (who never murdered or raped one single woman) into the cruellest foes of women. The weekly, *The Sunday Times* went:

'Under the Taliban,... pictures showing medieval barbarity.... Anyone viewing this film will expect the international response to be markedly different.'⁸⁴

The *Guardian* equated this incident with:

'Atrocities comparable to very worst scenes in Kosovo, or Chechnya.'⁸⁵

It is remarkable that the killing of one woman, for right or wrong reasons, is compared to the Serb and Russians' crimes, who, between them, have slaughtered many thousands of women, and raped over 250,000 such women.⁸⁶

⁸³ Figures in the medical journal: *The Lancet*; released on 11 October, 06.

⁸⁴ *The Sunday Times*: 26 June 2001.

⁸⁵ *The Guardian*: 26 June, 2001.

⁸⁶ Anyone is invited to check the media of the time on the huge numbers of Muslim women who have been raped and slaughtered.

3. Western Academia and its Role in Forming the Image of Muslim Barbarism

Cahen observes that:

‘Cultivated by businessmen, administrators, missionaries, oriental history has very often been dealt with according to interests and ideologies that cared little for historical truthfulness.’⁸⁷

Indeed, the thousands of Westerners who have dealt with Muslims, Islam, faith and civilisation, with the rarest exceptions, have pursued every other aim except the search for, or the conveying of truth, as here outlined by Edward Said:

‘To the West, Asia had once represented silent distance and alienation; Islam was militant hostility to European Christianity. To overcome such redoubtable constants the Orient needed first to be known, then invaded and possessed, then re-created by scholars, soldiers, and judges who disinterred forgotten languages, histories, races, and cultures in order to posit them - beyond the modern Oriental's ken - as the true classical Orient that could be used to judge and rule the modern Orient. The obscurity faded, to be replaced by hothouse entities; the Orient was a scholar's word, signifying what modern Europe had recently made of the still peculiar East.’⁸⁸

Courtesy of these academics, Muslim society is thus made comprehensible and intelligible by a variety of structures and concepts, defining and controlling it, working together, since to know is to subordinate as Kabbani puts it

‘The West had to reshape the Orient in order to comprehend it... to devise in order to rule.’⁸⁹

Indeed, when Sir William Jones, a servant of the East India Company, inaugurated studies of the Orient centuries ago, it was in order

‘To increase Europe's acquaintance with the peoples it would exert control upon.’⁹⁰

⁸⁷ C. Cahen: *l'Histoire économique et sociale de l'Orient Musulman médiéval*; *Studia Islamica* Vol 3 (1955) pp. 93-115; at p.94.

⁸⁸ E.Said: *Orientalism*, in J. Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession*: (Cambridge University Press, 1987); p.8.

⁸⁹ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; p. 138.

The origin of Western learning about Muslims and Islam is the direct outcome of the failed crusades of the Middle Ages (1095-1291). In the late Middle Ages, some of the earliest thinkers of Western Christendom: John of Segovia, Bacon, Wycliffe, Humbert of Romans and others concluded that the Muslims could not be defeated by the direct military means used then, and as they put it:

‘Their hearts were hardened, they despised the Scriptures, they rejected argument, they clung to the tissue of lies of the Qur'an.’⁹¹

More effective, Bacon argued in his *Opus Maius*, would be the learning of languages and of philosophy in order to convert the infidels.⁹² Ramon Lull (b.1232) also suggested writing books for the conversion of Jews and Muslims to Christianity and establishing monastery schools where future missionaries could learn Hebrew and Arabic.⁹³ Thus was proposed that an academic effort should be made, and that Arabic professorships should be established in Paris, Oxford, Bologna and Salamanca, etc.⁹⁴ The aim was to study and, as Said put it above, re-create the Orient in order to dominate it.

The first systematic study of Muslim society and Islam by Western Europeans dates from the late 16th century, when in 1587 regular teaching of Arabic was begun in Paris. It was the work of two medical doctors and a Maronite priest of Lebanon.⁹⁵ From Paris, the study of Arabic devolved to Leiden in Holland, in 1613. Twenty or so years later the subject was introduced in England, in Cambridge (1632), and Oxford (1634).⁹⁶ Instrumental in establishing the Chair at Cambridge was William Bedwell, who summed up the main objectives of such endeavour, in providing:

- ‘Good service of King and State in our commerce’;

⁹⁰ Z. Sardar and M.W. Davies: *Distorted Imaginations*; op cit; p. 43.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Jo Ann Hoepfner Moran Cruz: *Popular Attitudes Towards Islam*; in *Western Perceptions* (Blanks-Frassetto ed) op cit; p. 69.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Z. Sardar; M-W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; p. 42.

⁹⁵ P. Casanova: *L’Enseignement de l’Arabe au College de France* (Paris; 1910) in A.Hourani: *Islam in European Thought*; (Cambridge University Press; 1991); p. 12.

⁹⁶ A. Hourani: *Islam*; op cit; p.13.

- 'In God's good time to enlarging the borders of the Church, and propagation of the Christian religion to them who now sit in darkness'.⁹⁷

The study of Muslim society and Islam grew, and involved academics interested in matters of the Orient, which hardly meant enlightenment and understanding of Islam, as Sardar and Davies put it, but: 'to institutionalise ignorance via the use of reason and academic discourse.' The object of such Western academics, Sardar and Davies further observe, was:

'Unlike any other discipline - when, for example, one studies botany one shows certain respect for plants; when one studies entomology, one comes to appreciate insects; a zoologist has certain affinity for wild life; an ecologist cannot be expected to detest the environment - Orientalism came to be based on hate. The Orientalists loathed and feared, and to some extent still do, the subject of their study: Islam and Muslims. Apart from the obvious belief that Western civilization was the norm for all cultures, they also believed that Biblical tradition was the norm for all monotheism. Thus, Orientalism sought not to understand Islam but to dominate it, not to seek empathy with it but to ridicule it, abuse it and demonstrate its inferiority and, once raped, to envelop it within Western civilization and to turn Muslims into nice, docile, subject people, an extension of the West.'⁹⁸

One major aim of Western academia dealing with Islam has been to use knowledge of the Islamic subject, divisions amongst its ethnic and religious groups, most particularly, to exploit them so as to fight the Islamic foe. Western attention to Islam is, as Arenal points out, to put focus on, and use every sign of local identity.⁹⁹ This academic expertise on divisions amongst Muslims has been ruthlessly used through the centuries for Western political and military purposes, in stirring conflicts between Berbers, Kurds, Arabs, Turks, Shias, Sunnis, etc. During the colonial era, for instance, the French in Algeria and Morocco implemented diverse policies to divide and create tensions between

⁹⁷ Quoted by J.D. Latham in Z. Sardar and M.W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; p. 42.

⁹⁸ Ibid; p. 41.

⁹⁹ M. Garcia-Arenal: *Historiens de l'Espagne, historiens du maghreb au 19em siecle. Comparaison des stereotypes ANNALES: Economies, Societes, Civilisations: Vol 54 (1999): pp; 687-703, at p.702.*

Arabs and Berbers.¹⁰⁰ The English successfully conquered India by splitting Muslims between themselves, and by splitting them from their other subjects: Jats, Sikhs, etc.¹⁰¹ Today, the same can be seen everywhere, all forms of divisions and differences amongst Muslims played upon to stir conflict between them and so ease domination and control over them. Thus, in Iraq, today, by a crafty combination of media reports,¹⁰² political scheming, and selective bombings, assassinations and massacres, Sunnis and Shias are brought into armed conflict with each other. We also constantly hear and read that Saddam Hussein was a Sunni who mass murdered the Shias, whilst in truth, Saddam Hussein was the product of the West,¹⁰³ put and kept in power by the West, and never ruled as a Sunni, but as the leader of the secular, Christian dominated Baath Party.

Western study of Islam is also to unleash assault on the faith. Academics specialising on the Orient have often been rightly criticised for having a colonialist agenda and for being unable to represent honestly the indigenous peoples of the Middle East.¹⁰⁴ Instead of setting aside Western stereotypes of Islam, Westerners are always eager to reproduce them;¹⁰⁵ thus, we find, again and again, Garcia Arenal observes, the same obsessions with decadent Islam.¹⁰⁶ In the words of Sardar and Davies:

‘Armed with the tools of the new disciplines, Orientalist attacks on Islam became more intense, more confident, more pervasive, they ascribed ridiculously large and important roles to minorities: Christians, Jews, Ismailis, assassins, Hellenists, certain features of Sufi thought (Hallajism is a ‘religion of the cross’), anyone or anything which to their mind represented the antithesis of Islam and could undermine its basis.’¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ J.J. Cook: *The Maghrib through French Eyes; 1880-1929*; in *Through Foreign Eyes*; edited by A.A. Heggoy; (University Press of America; 1982); pp. 57-92. p. 91.

¹⁰¹ E. Driault: *La Question d'Orient*; (Librairie Felix Alcan; Paris; 1921); p. 63.

¹⁰² Hence the UK Daily, *The Guardian*, in its edition of 10 January 04, asserted that the bombing of a Shia Mosque the previous day was the work of Sunni extremists. How could the paper convincingly assert this when aware of the Iraqi mayhem, where it is literally impossible to know who is doing what, and when no Western journalists can operate safely outside the secure Green Zone of Baghdad (as reported in *The Guardian* itself 12 March 07; media section page 3).

¹⁰³ See various media reports following his execution on 30 December 06, such as the Independent 30 December 06; cover page and page two.

¹⁰⁴ C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades, Islamic Perspectives*, (Edinburgh; 1999); p.4.

¹⁰⁵ M. Garcia-Arenal: *Historiens de l'Espagne*, op cit; p.702.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Z. Sardar-M.W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; p. 43.

Indeed, academics, or so-called experts on Islam and Islamic countries, today, with rare exceptions, are only concerned with distorting the reality in relation to Islam, its politics, and everything concerned with it. Their ultimate aims are to turn the wrong into right, the right into wrong, and perpetuate fallacies. The many works by such 'specialists' of Islam such as Goldziher, Von Grunebaum, Schacht, Watt, Bosworth, Lewis, Rippin, etc, are proof of this relentless undermining of the faith and its adherents, which still proceeds in teaching and writing about Islam to this very day.¹⁰⁸

Academia, as Chapter Six, in particular, will amply show, has also worked diligently to distort the history of Islam and Muslims, and reshape it beyond recognition, suppressing the positive and exaggerating the negative in such history, thus presenting the image of the barbaric Muslim. As an instance, the role of Muslim civilisation in the rise of modern sciences and civilisation is systematically suppressed from knowledge by a variety of techniques.¹⁰⁹ Briefly, here, Western historians, as a rule, make centuries disappear from history, centuries (6th –14th), which correspond to the very period of Islamic ascendancy, and the Islamic foundation of Western science and civilisation,¹¹⁰ and when these centuries are removed from the record, as Glubb notes, it makes 'the subsequent story of the rise of Europe largely incomprehensible.'¹¹¹

If centuries are easy to erase, it is even easier to erase unwanted facts, following a technique consisting in each author going further than his predecessor in the suppression of the facts that either speak favourably of Islam, or unfavourably of Western Christendom. Any subject of history, eventually, ends up cleansed of all unwanted facts and their sources. To legitimise such a cleansed history, modern historians refer to each other, quote each other (and praise each other). Many such techniques of selective suppressions of facts to present a wholly distorted version of

¹⁰⁸ See the following works for an appreciation of the distortions written about Islam:
-A. Tibawi: *English Speaking Orientalists*; in *Islamic Quarterly*; vol 8; pp. 25-45.
-M.M. Al-Azami: *The History of the Qur'anic Text*; UK Islamic Academy; Leicester; 2003.

-E. Said: *Orientalism*; London; 1978.

¹⁰⁹ See Al-Djazairi: *The Hidden Debt*; op cit.

¹¹⁰ As noted by P. Benoit and F. Micheau: The Arab intermediary: in *A History of Scientific Thought*; ed M. Serres; (Blackwell, 1995); pp 191-221; p. 191.

¹¹¹ John Glubb: *A Short History of the Arab Peoples*; (Hodder and Stoughton, 1969); p.135.

history of civilisation have been well studied by Emeagwali, for instance.¹¹²

Western academia has made it a rule to exaggerate, and even fabricate a bleak history of Islam by attributing to the faith and its adherents all the dark pages in history. On 'Muslim piracy,' Brockelmann, a leading scholarly figure of Islam, writes:

'Down to the beginning of the 19th century the Beys of Tunisia and the Deys of Algiers, as well as the Qaramanlis in Tripolitania and the rulers of Morocco, had diligently pursued a career of piracy, which being directed against the Christians, was regarded by the Muslims as a meritorious war of faith. The Christian states had never been able to unite in a common action against them.'¹¹³

Thomson notes how, despite attempts by some historians (i.e Valensi,¹¹⁴ Fisher,¹¹⁵ Earle¹¹⁶) to rid history of the myth that North Africa's corsairs were the reason for Western attacks on Algeria, and the subsequent French colonisation of the country in 1830, still the myth prevails.¹¹⁷

Another instance relates to the burning of books, whereby the Muslims who invented mass production of books and the public library, and who had most of their books burned by the crusaders (and their Mongol allies), the Church and colonial authorities,¹¹⁸ are now turned into book-burning fanatics. The best instance in this respect is that of the library of Alexandria, whose burning was attributed to the Muslims by Abu Al-Farraj (Bar Hebraeus) (13th century). This theory was adopted by nearly all Western commentators to demonstrate Islam's

¹¹² At <http://members.aol.com/Sekglo/racism.htm>

This is a May 2001 modified version of an earlier paper published by G.T. Emeagwali in Science and Public Policy; *Journal of the International Science Policy Foundation*, Surrey; UK; Vol 16; No 3; 1989;

¹¹³ C. Brockelmann: *History of the Islamic Peoples*; (Routledge and Kegan Paul; London; 1950) reprint. P. 292; p. 397.

¹¹⁴ L. Valensi: *Le Maghreb avant la Prise d'Alger*; (Paris; 1969).

¹¹⁵ G. Fisher: *Barbary Legend*; Oxford; 1957.

¹¹⁶ P. Earle: *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*; (London; 1970).

¹¹⁷ A. Thomson: *Barbary and Enlightenment*: (Brill; Leiden; 1987); final Chapter: Towards Conquest.

¹¹⁸ On the Muslim origin of books, libraries, mass production of paper, etc, see: -J. Pedersen: *The Arabic Book*, (1928) tr. by G. French; (Princeton University Press; 1984).

-S.K. Padover: Muslim Libraries; in *The Medieval Library*; edited by J.W. Thompson (Hafner Publishing Company; New York; 1957 ed), pp. 347-68.

hostility to learning. It matters little if this alleged story of Muslim burning of the Alexandria Library dates five centuries after the incident supposedly took place (7th century). Thus, Voltaire cunningly forgave the Muslims for 'burning the Library of Alexandria' for 'haven't they by that also destroyed monumental errors of men,' as he put it.¹¹⁹ Research has proved that the Library had been burnt down by Caesar, first, and then Christian zealots centuries before the Muslim arrival, and that the Muslims had no part in such an incident.¹²⁰ Meyerhof also says how it is perhaps 'as an echo to the discussions of the end of the 12th century,' that we find surfacing at that epoch the legend by which the Arabs, during their conquest of Alexandria, had destroyed the famous library of that city although it had been demonstrated that it existed no longer.¹²¹ And yet, the idea holds strong even today amongst most learned circles repeatedly referring to the 'Arab' burning of the Great Alexandrian Library.

Simultaneously, just as it is busy darkening the history of Islam, today's academia is also busy removing from knowledge everything negative in Western history, and all this negative history, instead, is attributed to Islam and Muslims. This work will show many instances of how dark deeds such as the oppression of minorities, the genocide of natives, the African slave trade, the persecution of women, etc, are all suppressed from Western history today, and are being attributed to Islam and Muslims instead.

As it proceeds in the rewriting of history and reality, Western academia makes certain that any historians or academics seeking to give justice to Islam and Muslims find themselves facing inquisitorial situations. Fisher, for instance, who condemned the Barbary corsair legend,¹²² drew upon himself extreme hostility.¹²³ Equally, when Forster wrote favourable accounts of Islam,¹²⁴ he met considerable criticism. *The Methodist Magazine* ascribed to his pro-Islamic views to a 'satanic origin', or at least a satanic helping hand whose 'agency, dark, active,

¹¹⁹ Voltaire: *Essai sur les Moeurs*; Chapter VI; in P. Martino: *l'Orient dans la Literature Francaise au 17em et 18em siecles*; (Librarie Hachette; Paris; 1906); p. 319.

¹²⁰ E. Gibbon: *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; vol 5; fifth ed; (W. Smith; London, 1858).

¹²¹ M. Meyerhof: Von Alexandrian nach Baghdad, in Sitzb. Pr.Ak. 1930; in C. Cahen: *Orient et Occident*; op cit; p.211.

¹²² G. Fisher: *The Barbary Legend*; (Oxford; 1957).

¹²³ A. Thomson: *Barbary*; op cit; p. 125.

¹²⁴ C. Forster: *Mohametanism Unveiled*; (London; James Duncan and John Cochran; 1829).

malignant and intense, would be employed to give it success and extension;’ and this was even when Forster saw the Prophet as the ‘Antichrist’ and made an analogy of Islam with popery.¹²⁵ *The British Critic* held that should Forster’s views become popular, the *Critic* would not be at all surprised to learn of proposals for a ‘Society for the propagation of Islam.’ If ‘upon mature reflection’ Forster decided not to recant his opinion that ‘The Christian cause... is likely to be a debtor to this ministry of deception’.¹²⁶

Massignon, too, suffered the same hostile reactions when he said that he was struck by the spiritual value of Muslim religious experience and disturbed by the historical injustices inflicted against Islam, both as a religion and a group of peoples, oppressed and despised. He and his followers were charged with syncretism and ‘Islamising heresy’ by outraged supporters of ‘Church integrity.’¹²⁷

The same treatment was inflicted on every academic (and also journalist) who dared speak favourably of Islam and Muslims. This list includes amongst others Singer who spoke favourably of the Islamic role in the rise of modern technology, Castro who insisted on the Muslim influence on Spain,¹²⁸ Menocal for the same,¹²⁹ etc.

Cleansing away bad academics, especially those who write favourably about Islam (or negatively about Western Christendom), also means cleansing their names away from bibliographies, references, and eventually from all knowledge. An example amongst the hundreds that can be cited here is Philip Conrad’s *History of Spain*.¹³⁰ It is a work which not only distorts history, but worse, in his bibliography (pp 125-6), Conrad gives prominence to all historians hostile to anything Islamic: Perez, Lapeyre (on whom more further on), Menendez Pidal, and of course, Alborno. Conrad also suppresses from his bibliography sources such as Castro, Levi Provencal, Lea, Lane Poole, Dozy etc.

¹²⁵ The Methodist magazine, p, 75. in C. Bennett: *Victorian Images of Islam*, op cit; p.39.

¹²⁶ The British Critic; p. 43. in C. Bennet: *Victorian Images*; p. 39.

¹²⁷ See introduction to the work of R.Dagorn, *le Geste d'ismael d'apres l'onomastique et la tradition Arabe*; (Geneva; 1980); M. Rodinson: *Europe*; op cit; p. 78.

¹²⁸ A. Castro: *Espana en su historia. Cristianos, moros y judios*; (Buenos Aires: Losada, 1948), 709 pp; see *The Structure of Spanish History*, English translation with revisions and modifications by E. A. King; (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), 689 pp.

¹²⁹ Maria Rosa Menocal: *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1987).

¹³⁰ P. Conrad: *Histoire de la Reconquista*; Que Sais je? (Presses Universitaire de France; Paris; 1998).

that not only recognise the Islamic impact on Spanish history, but also show the crimes of the Catholic Church towards the Muslims of Spain.

Other techniques used to distort history against Islam consist in the suppression of subjects from courses, and suppressing unwanted book titles from references handed to students. Books are also vanished or are made difficult to access, some of the best books placed in special collections, with strict access. And one is not referring to the Vatican Library, here, but to many university libraries. Of course, manuscripts are even harder to get at. And finally there is the technique of restricting access to works that are not included in the university libraries, and that can be sought elsewhere. Here reasons such as high costs, restricted loans, etc, being invoked to justify the non accessibility.

With the exception of German universities, Western departments of history, or other social science departments: politics, Middle Eastern Studies, etc, are overwhelmingly free of 'aliens' (especially Muslims), and are obsessively concerned with presenting a positive image of the West contrasting with the dark image of Islam. The few scholars of Muslim origin to be found in these departments are overwhelmingly those never willing to write about the real issues. The overwhelming majority of these 'scholars' deal only with matters of secondary or no importance at all to Islam or Muslims such as Ismaili poetry or belief, the poetry of Omar Khayyam, etc, or divisive issues such as criticism of the Shariah, the need and ways to reform the Qur'an, etc.

The scarcity, or extreme rarity of historians of 'alien' origin in Western institutions can be highlighted in the following manner. Departments of engineering, medicine, and other exact sciences, where ideology has little place in research, include often up to 80% of their teaching personnel from amongst the foreign element. In ideology based departments, that is departments of sociology, economy, literature (up to a point) and above all history, the proportion of foreigners is never higher than 2%.¹³¹ And even this low proportion is of 'docile' elements who never write on anything that upsets the established order or seeks to counter the fallacies and attacks on Islam and Muslims. Should the proportion of alien staff rise in history departments of the West, and considering all sorts of fallacies that have been already touched upon, and the many that will be addressed further on, it is most likely that much, if not most of present

¹³¹ This is the author's own observation and cannot be scientifically proved. However, others are invited to verify this assertion when visiting such institutions, and looking at the list of personnel on the departmental walls.

The Myth of Muslim Barbarism – and its Aims

history will have to be re-written. And not just that, the whole Western approach to Islam and Muslims would have to be redefined, with a new academia leading the way.

However, when considering that the Western academic approach to Islam and Muslims has a long life, was born out of the field of conflict with Islam (the crusades), and was stirred by a colonial ideology, the possibility for this new academia arising and devising a new approach to Islam and Muslims is a far fetched one. And when we know that politicians have policies shaped on the advice of academia, and that journalists are also taught by such academics, and that millions of people derive their perceptions and knowledge from such academics, we realise how destructive is the role of Western academia in relation to Islam and Muslims.

4. The Use of Images

Other than rhetoric, as this work amply illustrates, it is an old Western art to use and exploit the power of images for the purpose of accentuating Muslim evil and barbarism. During the crusades, for instance, whilst the Franks were slaughtering their way into the Muslim world,¹³² their draughtsmen were able to create a completely different image of both deed and foe. This is seen in the illustrations of the chronicles of William of Tyre (1130?-90).¹³³ The Muslims are distinguished from the Franks by their exaggerated physical features, to the limits of caricature. The reader would recognise the evil nature of the characters, as today villains in comics can be recognised easily.¹³⁴ Two late manuscripts, from 1285 and 1295¹³⁵ put in evidence the ugliness of the adversary. The Turkish defenders of Antioch wear turbans and black, dense beards, are dressed in simple tunics... a grin on their face, the eyebrows dense and dark, the lips thick, eagle nosed, they appear in profile in an inferior position, which the draughtsman attributes to mediocre and inferior people.¹³⁶ These very features are found in another representation of the siege of Antioch, where grinning, tightly packed Turks behind their walls, can see advancing the heavy Frankish cavalry, carrying spears topped by heads of Turks, easily recognisable: thick lips, strong noses, hair similar to that of Africans represented in European Classical art.¹³⁷ Thus, far from ignoring the Oriental world, the draughtsmen know how to describe the adversary in caricaturing him with large features, their equipment incomplete, some physical features inferior, features which translate the diffuse perception that the West had in the 13th century of Islam: a world that was upside-down from Christian values, the archetype of evil, the ultimate enemy, that we can only fight to the death.¹³⁸

¹³² See S. Runciman: *The Crusades*; (Cambridge University Press; 1962).

¹³³ M Balard; les Musulmans d'après les illustrations de Guillaume de Tyr, in *De Toulouse a Tripoli*; Colloque held between 6 and 8 December, 1995, (University of Toulouse. 1997); pp 143-51. Pictures pp 152-166p.

¹³⁴ Ibid; pp. 143-4.

¹³⁵ (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. fr. 9082 and 9084).

¹³⁶ F. Garnier: *Le Language de l'image au Moyen Age*, (Paris, 1982), I, P. 142-3. in M. Ballard: les Musulmans, op cit; p. 146.

¹³⁷ M Balard: Les Musulmans d'après les illustrations; op cit; p.145.

¹³⁸ Ibid; p. 149.

This technique of enhancing Muslim barbarism or cruelty via pictures became intensified in subsequent centuries as many instances in this work show. During the colonial era (19th-20th century), Muslim barbarism was caught in a number of paintings, which Kabbani describes with great skill. The artists recreated in their studios the cave of Ali Baba they had read about as children. They also added the necessary objects of violence to depict what they imagined to be a particularly violent East. Gautier's description of Chasseriau's atelier illustrates this vogue: 'Daggers, swords, knives, pistols; fire arms...' ¹³⁹ that represented an explosive and dangerous place where murder was a simple occurrence, where barbaric cruelty and opulence displayed themselves openly. ¹⁴⁰

Visiting another Orientalist painter's studio, Gautier's literary imagination provided him with the ready scenes of Eastern criminality to animate the space created by the presence of so many exotic objects: 'This room could serve as a background for some scenes of jealousy and murder; blood would not taint these deep purple carpets.' ¹⁴¹ And Gautier's perception of an Orient where gore and gems went hand in hand, where blood did not show a stain on the deep purple of Persian rugs, recurred like an insistent theme through the most popular of Orientalist tableaux. ¹⁴²

Eugene Delacroix's 'La Mort de Sardanapale' was painted in 1827 before he actually made the journey East. It contains the stock images of Europe's Orient, culled from Byron's popular poem of that name. An Oriental despot sits enthroned on his luxurious bed (with its fantastic heads of elephants and its crimson drapery) detachedly watching all his earthly possessions being destroyed. His naked concubines are being stabbed to death by three dark villains, and his horse is being dragged away. All is chaotic, the brushstroke depicting the scene is an aptly 'romantic' and agitated one, while the canvas is crammed full of dramatic detail and incident, leaving no restful vacuum for the gaze. ¹⁴³

Henri Regnault's 'Execution sans jugement sous les rois maures' (Execution without Trial under Moorish Kings) of 1870 depicts a killing, the title giving it 'historical' validity: a guard has just executed a man who resembles him in colour, stature and facial features. He looks down unmoved at the severed head as he wipes the blood from the body on his sleeve. The dripping blood forms shapes that parody

¹³⁹ As quoted by Phillipe Julian: *Les Orientalistes*, (Paris; 1977); p. 72.

¹⁴⁰ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; pp. 74-5.

¹⁴¹ Phillipe Julian: *Les Orientalistes*; op cit; p. 73.

¹⁴² R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; p. 75.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

the muted arabesque design of the background. The guard's powerful muscles bulge, his massive figure in sharp contrast to the soft lines of his tunic. The red of the blood is transfused into diffuse shades: the orange that bathes the whole scene; the pink robe that the guard wears which deepens into blood colour again between his feet, so that he seems to be wading in blood; and the red belt that is wrapped around the dead man's waist. The guard is made more imposing since he is seen by the viewer from below: he looms at the top of the stairs, his sword at neck-level. No other figure in the painting is there to witness the scene; it has been committed in secret, with little emotion, a killing without judgment as befits a capriciously cruel Orient.¹⁴⁴

The villain in Orientalist painting is almost always depicted as very dark or as black. In a painting entitled 'The Prisoner' painted by Filippo Baratti in 1883, two dark men appear to be relishing the humiliation of a frail old white man, who is bound and at their mercy. The roles are polarised here, for the painters of this genre could not conceive of white and black as equals - one had always to be at the other's mercy, even when they both fell into the category of 'Orientals'.¹⁴⁵

The use of images is even more effective today, especially due to the Muslim bearded subjects and other distinctive features such as the veil. Hence, if one picks up a British daily, *The Daily Mirror*, one of the dailies least hostile to the Muslims, in its edition of 25 January 03, straight behind the cover page, it shows the Prince of Wales talking to a Muslim woman completely shrouded in black, with the exception of her eyes. On the occasion, the Prince of Wales came across tens of Muslim women all wearing a diversity of less intimidating cloaks, and yet the paper, like the rest of the media, chose that image to define the Muslim woman. The same daily a week later, on 1 February, returned to the issue of a woman threatened with stoning in Nigeria for adultery, and again, used the very powerful image of her holding a small baby, turning the possible execution of a woman, something more current in the USA than anywhere else, into a crime against motherhood. This particular instance is the work of a columnist writing in the central pages, who preaches for the life of a woman, and yet constantly favours the war in Iraq. Hence, by the power of an image, a person in favour of the military occupation of a nation turns into a carer for humanity.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid; pp. 77-8.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid; p. 78.

The associated vision of the Muslim as a figure of extremes - excessive in zeal, in cruelty, in sensuality has been particularly enduring.¹⁴⁶ Hence the image of the beast, today; the largest picture one could find in the Sunday Times.¹⁴⁷ His dark, large, bearded ghoulis face is surmounted with piercing black eyes; and the winter coat he wears adds to his monstrous feature as the 'Islamist murderer.' He had murdered his sister who had been 'raped.' The six page long article in the weekly (Sunday Times) is given even more poignancy by the witness account of the Palestinian (Armenian born) Professor Shalhoub Kevorkian who tells us how raped Palestinian girls are killed by their families, and how hard she labours against 'the barbarism' of society.¹⁴⁸

Looking at the photograph of the ghoul, who symbolises all Islamists, does not just highlight the plight of his victims, it amply justifies his eradication and that of his like. And their eradicator, whoever it is, becomes a modernist, and a saviour of humanity.

Esposito gives us a good instance of how the modern media works to associate dramatic pictures with shocking headlines to enhance the fear and threat of Islam. He notes how:

'The stereotypical image of Islam and Muslims as menacing militant fundamentalists was reflected strikingly in B. Lewis' talk entitled "Islamic Fundamentalism," given as the prestigious Jefferson Lecture of 1990, the highest honour accorded by the U.S. government to a scholar for achievement in the Humanities. A revised version became a lead article, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," in the *Atlantic Monthly*.¹⁴⁹

The "packaging"- the new title, the magazine's cover, and the article's two pictures - of "Roots of Muslim Rage" reflects the pitfalls of a selective presentation. It reinforces stereotypes of Islamic revivalism and of Muslims and predisposes the reader to view the relationship of Islam to the West in terms of rage, violence, hatred, and irrationality. Because of Bernard Lewis' international stature as a leading scholar and political commentator on the Middle East, his topic and its prominent public platform, "Roots of Muslim Rage" received widespread coverage nationally and internationally. It has had a significant impact both on Western perceptions of contemporary Islam

¹⁴⁶ John Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession*: (Cambridge University Press, 1987); p.6.

¹⁴⁷ The Sunday Times Magazine; July 8, 2001.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ B. Lewis: Roots of Muslim Rage; *Atlantic Monthly*; 226:3; September; 1990; 47; 51.

and on many Muslim perceptions of how Islam and Muslims are viewed in the West.

The message and impact of “Roots of Muslim Rage” is reinforced by the picture on the front cover of the *Atlantic Monthly*, portraying a scowling, bearded, turbaned Muslim with American flags in his glaring eyes. The threat motif and confrontational tone are supplemented by the two pictures used in the article, ostensibly presenting the quintessential Muslim perception of America as the enemy. The first is of a serpent marked with the stars and stripes seen crossing a desert (America’s dominance of or threat to the Arab world); the second shows the serpent poised as if to attack from behind an unsuspecting pious Muslim at prayer. Like other sensationalist stereotypes, pictures meant to be provocative, to attract the reader, feed into our ignorance and reinforce a myopic vision of the reality. Muslims are attired in “traditional” dress, bearded and turbaned, despite the fact that most Muslims (and most “fundamentalists”) do not dress or look like this. The result reinforces the image of Islamic activists as medieval in life-style and mentality.

The title, “Roots of Muslim Rage,” sets the tone and expectation. Yet would we tolerate similar generalizations in analyzing and explaining Western activities and motives? How often do we see articles that speak of Christian rage or Jewish rage?

Partial analysis which reinforces comfortable stereotypes and Western secular presuppositions must be transcended, if we are to avoid the ideological pitfalls and biases of a political analysis driven by an exaggerated threat.¹⁵⁰

Cinema and television are the most powerful pictorial weapons to promote the image of the evil Muslim. Television, in particular, is having a devastating effect with regard to the depictions and perceptions of Islam and Muslims. Not a single day passes without the tens, maybe hundreds, of channels, bombarding every home worldwide, drilling in the same images of Islam and Muslims. There is hardly, if ever, anything positive shown or said on Islam or Muslims throughout the Western television networks. Instead, there is a daily outpouring of news, views, images, reports, documentaries, and fictional stories, all depicting and ranting about the Muslim beast and his abhorrent faith. And nothing can be more powerful than what grips people inside their own homes, the image of the barbaric Muslim not just becoming inescapable, much worse, penetrating

¹⁵⁰ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; pp. 173-4.

people's ultimate refuge, their own living rooms, the Muslim threat and barbarism literally hanging most menacingly close.

There is hardly any instance of films depicting Muslims favourably, either. The Muslims are nearly always cast as villains, with the same gross physical features depicted above (thick lips, slimy expressions, etc). The instance taken here is the 1950s film *El-Cid* (starring Charlton Heston). *El-Cid* is the courageous, loyal, humane, Christian figure, fighting the black-faced, vile, cruel, fanatic Muslim invaders, and he crushes them in the end. Nothing in the film presents the Muslim in good light except those amongst them who chose to fight on the Christian side. Whilst the film enhances the villainy of the Muslims to the point of caricature, it attributes handsome and gentle characteristics to the Christians. Unlike the film, though, historical reality tells us that the mass slaughters in Spain were the work of the Christians, who eventually wiped out the whole Muslim population of the Peninsula.¹⁵¹ As for *El-Cid*, he was 'treacherous and cruel, a violater of altars, and a breaker of his own faith,'¹⁵² and as Dozy points out, the romantic history of the *Cid* is a tissue of inventions.¹⁵³

If by chance a film depicts the Muslims in good light, then, just like with academia above, or any journalist or politician who dare commit this sin of being favourable to anything Islamic, their fall from grace is never very far. George Clooney, who sought to present Muslims as the victims of big politico-business interests in *Syriana*, has seen his status and position within the industry fall sharply. Ridley Scott's film *Kingdom of Heaven* was deemed by 'eminent' crusade historians to be publicity for al-Qaeda.¹⁵⁴ Film critics have reserved their most vitriolic lines to describe it. Here is one instance. The critic awarded the film the lowest star rating (one), together with derogatory comments:

¹⁵¹ See H.C. Lea: *A History of the Inquisition in Spain*, in four volumes, (The MacMillan Company, New York, 1907), volume three.

J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*; (Faber and Faber, London, 1974).

¹⁵² S. Lane-Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; (Fisher Unwin; London; 1888); p.192.

¹⁵³ R. Dozy: Spanish Islam, in S. Lane Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; p. 192.

¹⁵⁴ J.R. Smith; See Times 20 March 06 on Vatican conference on the Crusades.

The Manufacture of the Muslim Beast

5-11 AUGUST 2006 THE INDEPENDENT

Kingdom of Heaven 8pm Sky Movies 2 ★
(Ridley Scott 2005) There are so many things wrong with this film that it's hard to know where to begin. Orlando Bloom is woefully miscast as the blacksmith who becomes a knight in the Holy War. As ever, the brilliant Muslim military leader Saladin, who was in reality portly and one-eyed, is portrayed as a kind of Omar Sharif.

Concluding Words - Western Manufacture of an Image, and Muslim Ineptness

As is seen in the following chapter, the depictions of Muslims as barbaric, heretic fiends is contradicted by reality, yet, in Western depictions, they have become ‘truths’ by the power of sheer repetition of the same assertions for more than ten centuries. Whilst it is true that there are evil deeds committed by Muslims, which need to be dealt with like any other crime, it is also obvious that the gap between rhetoric and reality is immeasurably vast. It is, indeed, very easy for any individual just to pick up the amount of times Western figures, media, academia, and other opinion makers rant about the threat and barbarism of Islam, and compare such daily outpouring of hostile rhetoric with reality, a reality that throws at us daily countless bodies of Muslims tortured, drilled into, decapitated, torn to pieces, their homes and cities turned into rubble, and for those surviving them, their families and relatives, their lives shattered by loss, grief, and worldly injustice.

Painting the Muslims as barbaric fiends is not just contradicted by reality; it is also, as this work insists, extremely dangerous. The reason for this work, indeed, is to highlight this problem, and show how demonising others, painting them as barbaric or as inferior barbarians has always led to their mass killing. The last chapter of this work will amply show this by looking at, how, throughout history, the Christian West has used the excuse of Muslim barbarism to unleash massive military onslaughts on Muslims, killing them in their millions.

Demonising others living within the Christian West, including Muslims, has also, always, led to their mass killings. The recent experiences of the Muslims in Bosnia, or the Jews in the 1930s and 1940s are tragic lessons in front of us showing how minorities that are deemed dangerous, inferior, and threatening the unity, culture and stability of the West has led to their mass killing. It is, of course, impossible to deny that the Christian West is a welcoming society, and in its vast majority is a decent population that has given the Muslims in its midst welcome and vast opportunities to excel at all levels, thrive and prosper. Western society has also given us the majority of good things which we all enjoy today, and which make our lives easier and more comfortable. Western society

has also had its countless figures who gave all for the good of humanity, and its vast majority today stands by what is right, and any random study or query would show this fundamental decency of Western society. The fact remains, though, that under certain circumstances, as history has shown, in response to fear, which can be instigated by any serious incident, or any groups of individuals, regardless of their origins, the voices of decency, of humanity, of good, can be silenced by one means or the other, including selective assassinations, and then, mayhem can be unleashed. This has always been the case, from the 1st World War, which devastated the lives of millions of people, to the rise of the Nazi Party, to the mass repression in the 1970s in Chile and Argentina, to the killings in Bosnia, etc, the forces of evil would remove every hurdle in front of them, and in a climate of fear and chaos, in the midst of outrages of all sorts committed by invisible forces, stirred by a propaganda of hate, they can unleash terrible woes on millions.

Demonising Muslims so rabidly is both criminal and evil for other reasons. It is plainly wrong to taint Islam and Muslims with barbarism when Islam, as will be seen in many instances in this work, is a religion based on peace and tolerance. It is also evil to rant about the barbarism of a culture, faith and a civilisation when it has contributed to the good of humanity, including the West, so decisively, as chapter six will amply show. It is, most of all, the worst of all evils to rant about the evil of a culture, a faith, and civilisation by using evil deeds committed by some of its individuals, or some claiming to act in its name, and generalise such evil to the whole community, when almost the whole of this community aspires only to as much good for itself and for others as any other community does.

Whilst demonic depictions of Muslims could not be fought in past centuries, and the cycle of Western demonic onslaught on Islam and Muslims could not be broken, today, this Muslim incapacity to fight and shatter Western demonisation of them and their faith is criminal. A very recent and pertinent article in this respect by Robert Fisk in the British daily, *The Independent*, highlights the Muslim problem. Fisk notes how the leaders of the Muslim community when meeting with the recently elected Pontiff, hoping to hear a conciliatory message, were instead lectured at length about the evil of (Muslim) terrorism, as they humbly listened to the admonition 'their heads slightly bowed, their eyes glancing furtively towards the (television) camera.'¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ R. Fisk: How easily.... In the Independent; 27 August; 05. p. 33.

Whilst one would not expect the Muslim leadership, nor other elites, to begin to slander the pope, or slander the West, because this would be utterly wrong and in Islam anyway whole communities or faiths are never depicted negatively, or criminal intentions generalised to them, remaining silent is, however, criminal and dishonourable. Muslims, i.e. their supposed elites: professors, doctors, journalists, professionals, teachers, head-teachers, and leaders of Muslim institutions, etc, ought at least to offer a counter argument, to use facts, past and present, to prove the Western line wrong. Only a couple of Muslims, the likes of Tibawi, Gunny, and Kabbani have tried to fight back in recent decades, very certainly amidst total indifference from the rest of the elites, who never understood what the whole thing was about because they are truly illiterate. Indeed, the intellectual strength of most of the Muslim elites, the most criminally negligent of whom are those based in the West (where libraries and books thrive in great abundance) is near nil. Only a few of them ever consult or read a book. One, of course, is not advising them to read books full of lies which neither profit them nor their nation, but there are countless books, including by great Muslim authors (Ibn Taymiyya, al-Ghazali, Malek Bennabi, Seyed Qutb, etc), which they need to read. There are countless books by Muslim historians (Ibn al-Athir, Abu'l Feda, Ibn Khaldun, Al-Maqqari, al-Makrizi, Al-Djabarti, etc), which they also need to read to understand the reality of their nation, and to fight back against the slurs and lies about their faith, their nation and themselves. Muslim elites would never do so, though. In their vast majority, their eagerness and expertise reside in accumulating earthly possessions, securing their positions wherever they can, and networking whenever the situation arises. Fighting back Western demonisation of them, or offering support to those doing it, is beyond their will or capacity.

It is not just the daily onslaught on Islam they fail to address. Elites, just like the overwhelming majority of the Muslim community are in fact criminally silent, unmoved by the mass killing of fellow Muslims. Just as they looked on with indifference at the mass slaughter of Palestinians at Sabra and Chatila and other camps, and the mass slaughter and rape of Bosnians and Chechnyans, and the mass slaughter and torture of tens of thousands of Muslims elsewhere, they look on with utter indifference today at the most ghastly sight of all, the mass killings and mass dumping of mutilated Iraqi bodies in rubbish dumps. Even the sight of wailing mothers and relatives torn with grief by the side of smashed bodies fails to shake a community sunk in utter apathy. The Muslim community today is in fact a beehive in numbers and a graveyard of indifference. A whole community

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that is completely oblivious to the fact that, if there is one consistent element since the 1980s, then it is that Muslims are slaughtered en masse in one place after the other. Blinded by an ephemeral sense of security in some places, Muslims in general are too corrupted by material life, criminally apathetic, to stand up against such mass killings and to fight the rhetoric which rants about Muslim barbarism, failing to realise that next time it could be where they are that the killing will take place.

And so, in the midst of Muslim criminal silence, the whole apparatus and science of Western demonisation of Islam proceeds, and the image of the barbaric, inferior, Muslim grows ever larger every day. The fate of people and nations depicted as barbaric inferiors has always been, at some point, their mass culling, as history has shown us. And we are all sleep-walking into it.

Two

THE DEPICTION OF MUSLIMS THROUGH THE AGES

For more than ten centuries, Islam, the Prophet (PBUH), and Muslims have been at the centre of a systematic, unremitting campaign of slander and attacks carried by the Christian West. This ten or so century-old propaganda has depicted Muslims and their faith as barbaric, corrupt, inferior, and above all threatening, a peril to the world in general and the Christian West in particular. Although constantly based on lies and distortions, as will be amply shown in this chapter, still such depictions and attacks on Islam and Muslims have lasted from the Middle Ages to this very day, snowballing, changing slightly in form, but remaining the same in substance for more than a millennium. This relentless onslaught is the outcome of the Western inability, or unwillingness, or both, to deviate from such a line for centuries, since it has served its purpose in the war on Islam, as will be obvious from the following.

The worst of Western depictions of Islam and the Prophet will be omitted in this outline; although it must be said any slander of both Islam and the Prophet is depraved and painful to reproduce. Yet it is necessary to show how the image of the Muslims and Islam has been formed by the West for centuries.

1. In the Middle Ages

Today's Western depiction of Muslims and Islam, as already noted, was born in the Middle Ages. It has only changed in form, but in content it has remained roughly the same, with the Muslims painted as perverse, violent, heretics. The medieval perception of Islam, itself, was the result of the violent military encounters between Islam and the Christian West, with the crusades, above all, impacting crucially on such perceptions.

During the crusades (1095-1291), Muslims were depicted as pagans, sexual deviants, heretics, cruel persecutors of Christians who deserved their fate, i.e. their mass killing at the hands of the crusaders. As Sweetman points out, Islam was represented to the popular mind as the religion of the 'pagan Saracens,' and they were all too often regarded solely as the traditional enemy, 'against whom it was an act of piety and penance to take up the banner of the cross.'¹⁵⁶ According to the contemporary Christian polemicist, Petrus Tudebodus, the Muslims were: 'Our enemy and God's... saying diabolical sounds in I know not what language.'¹⁵⁷ The geographical and ethnic distinctions between these enemies are confused at one point Tudebodus describes a castle 'full of innumerable pagans: Turks, Saracens, Arabs, Publicans, and other pagans.'¹⁵⁸ Many of the place names are familiar from the Bible; Tudebodus and other chroniclers associate the pagans with the places where antichrist is born and raised: Babylon and Corosan.¹⁵⁹

Whilst the crusaders are seen as the new apostles, the Muslims 'play the familiar role of the Pagan Roman persecutors; their paganism and barbarism are a necessary counterpart to the steadfast devotion of the crusaders/apostles.'¹⁶⁰ Tolan explains how the association of Islam with paganism justified the crusades as a vengeance against 'such pagans.'¹⁶¹ Thus, during the first crusade (1095), according to the Christian apologist Tudebodus, the crucifix, confronted with an idol of

¹⁵⁶ J. W. Sweetman: *Islam and Christian Theology*; (Lutterworth Press; London; 1955); part two; p.57

¹⁵⁷ Petrus Tudebolus: *Historia de Hierosolimitanorum*; (edited by J and L. Hill; Paris; 1977); p. 51.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid; p. 128.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid; p. 73; 77; 148; etc.

¹⁶⁰ J. V. Tolan: Muslims as pagan idolaters in *Chronicles of the First Crusades*; in *Western Views* (D.R. Blanks, and M. Frassetto ed); op cit; pp. 97-117; at p. 101.

¹⁶¹ Ibid; p. 105.

Machomet, began to bleed miraculously.¹⁶² Here the idol Machomet combats Christ on the crucifix, and the crucifix will win.¹⁶³ The Amiravissus (apparently the Muslim ruler of Jerusalem) subsequently laments the imminent fall of the city (1099) and twice invokes 'Machomet and other gods.'¹⁶⁴ The confrontation between God's army and the pagan army, as between the crucifix and the idol of 'Machomet,' can have only one outcome: Christian victory. Themes essential to Christian history: pilgrimage, martyrdom, and the fight against idolatry, combining to form a powerful apology for the crusade.¹⁶⁵

In the wake of the Christian capture of Jerusalem (July 1099), the Muslim population was mass slaughtered. The Christian chroniclers rejoiced in the deed. A contemporary, Abbot Raymond of Agiles of the French town of Du Puy, present during the dramatic moments, wrote with glee:

'When our men took the main defences, we saw then some astonishing things amongst the Saracens. Some were beheaded, and that's the least that could happen to them. Others were pierced through and so threw themselves from the heights of the walls; others after having suffered in length were thrown into the flames. We could see in the roads and in the places of Jerusalem bits and pieces of heads, hands, and feet. Everywhere we could only walk through cadavers. But all that was only little... The abbot's description moves onto the Mosque of Omar, where: there was so much blood in the old temple of Solomon that dead corpses swam in it. We could see hands floating and arms that went to glue themselves to bodies that were not theirs; we could not distinguish which arm belonged to which body. The men who were doing the killing could hardly bear the smoke from the corpses.'¹⁶⁶

For Raymond this massacre of 70,000 Muslims, at least, was sweet revenge. He says:

'This was truly a judgment of God, that that place should receive their blood, since it endured for such a long time their blasphemies against

¹⁶² Petrus Tudebodus: *Historia*; in J.V. Tolan: *Muslims*; p. 105.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ J.V. Tolan: *Muslims as pagan idolaters*; *op cit*; p. 105.

¹⁶⁶ Abbot Raymond of Aguilers; in G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation*; *op cit*; p. 249.

God.... I say that this day saw the weakening of paganism, the confirmation of Christianity, and the renovation of our faith.¹⁶⁷

St Bernard was the main preacher of the second crusade (1148), which was eventually to end in great failure outside Damascus. His inflammatory rhetoric to mobilise the Christians went as follows:

"This we altogether forbid," preached St Bernard, "that for any reason they should enter into an alliance with (the Muslims), neither for money nor for tribute, until with the help of God either their religion or their nation has been destroyed."

St Bernard's 'Book of Praise of the New Army, to the Knights of the Temple' illustrates the thinking of the churchmen of the day. The soldier of Christ, he asserts:

"Carries a sword not without reason; for he is the minister of Christ for the punishment of evil-doers, as well as for the praise of good men. Clearly when he kills a malefactor he is not a homicide but as I should say a malicide, and he is simply considered the avenger of Christ on those who do evil and the protector of Christians. But when he himself is killed he is known not to perish but to survive.

Therefore the death which he proposes is for the profit of Christ; and that which he receives, for his own. The Christian glories in the death of the non-Christian, because Christ is glorified; in the death of the Christian the liberality of the King appears, as the soldier is led to his sword.... Not indeed that even non-Christians ought to be killed if there were some other way to prevent them from molesting or oppressing the faithful; but now it is better that they should be killed than that the rod of sinners should certainly be left over the fate of the just: lest perchance the just reach out their hands to iniquity."¹⁶⁸

Not only, therefore, is Christ glorified in the death of the infidel, but killing is justified if only because the Christians may begin to pick up the ways of the Arabs.¹⁶⁹

Another contemporary, Humbert of Romans, was a back-room expert who summarized the theory as it stood in the thirteenth century. He made a collection of his crusading sermons, and his reputation in this field stood so high that he wrote his *Threefold Work* to brief the

¹⁶⁷ Raymond D' Aguilers: *Liber*, eds J.H and L. I. Hill; (Paris; 1969); pp. 150-1.

¹⁶⁸ St Bernard in N. Daniel: *The Arabs and Medieval Europe*; op cit; pp. 252-3.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

Fathers at the Council of Lyons in 1274.¹⁷⁰ A just war must cause the innocent to suffer, as so often happened in Europe to poor farmers, and hospitals and leper-colonies; but, he argued, the Muslim nation was culpable in the highest degree. There must be a sufficient cause to justify war, nothing like injured pride, or avarice, or vainglory; but the army of God fought for something better than even a material right, it fought for the faith. A just war must be fought on adequate authority; but the Crusade was fought on the authority of God, and so it was a just war in the highest degree. The Church wields two swords, against heretics and against rebels; but Muslims destroyed the body like the latter and the soul like the former... When it was objected that it might happen that innocent Christians suffered more than guilty Muslims, Humbert pointed out that this was not so, and instanced the splendid occasion when the blood of the Arabs came up to the horses' knees, at the capture of Jerusalem in 1099.¹⁷¹

The doctrine of the just war received impetus from the Crusade. Apparently some objectors contrasted the behaviour of Christ and the Apostles with this shedding of blood, but Humbert pointed out that conditions had changed: Christians then had had no power and so been compelled to proceed by humility; now it was quite different; then they had miracles, now they had arms.¹⁷²

A great number of other factors in Western Christian eyes justified the mass slaying of Muslims, and their 'idolatry' was a principal one. Muslims were, thus, charged with polytheism, the worship of statues and representations of the Prophet.¹⁷³ In William's epics,¹⁷⁴ the Muslims, other than being hideous, treacherous, cowardly, arrogant, and willing to sacrifice their first-born sons, adore the gods: Mahomet, Cahu, Appolyon, and Tervagant, which are all earthly idols.¹⁷⁵ Fulk of Chartres who took part in the first crusade (launched 1095) and lived in Jerusalem for over a quarter of a century says that in the Dome of the Rock the Muslims 'used to pray to an idol made in the name of Mahumet.'¹⁷⁶ Epics associated with Aymeri of Narbonne and his son,

¹⁷⁰ N. Daniel: *The Arabs and Medieval Europe*, p. 253.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ C. Pellat, 'L'idée de Dieu chez les «Sarrasins» des chansons de geste', *Studia islamica*, 22, (1965), 5-24.

¹⁷⁴ *Guillaume d'Orange; Four Twelfth Century Epics*; Tr John Ferrante (New York; 1974), pp. 63-139.

¹⁷⁵ In Jo Ann Hoeppner Moran Cruz: *Popular Attitudes*; op cit; p. 58.

¹⁷⁶ Fulcheri Carnotensis...in B. Z. Kedar: *Crusade and Mission*; (Princeton University Press; 1984), at p. 89.

William of Orange, (written ca 1200, but legendary from the previous century), treat the Muslims as idol worshippers, and portray them as wicked creatures.¹⁷⁷ Pagans and Muslims were one and the same in the *Ars Fidei Catholicae* of Alanus de Insulis (b.ca 1128), where he has a section '*contra paganos seu Mohometanos*',¹⁷⁸ whilst Jacques de Vitry wrote: 'as often as the followers of Mohammed possess the Temple of Solomon, they set up his statue in the Temple and permit no Christian to enter.'¹⁷⁹

The Prophet is also said to have made himself adored as an idol, and even as a god, the *Gesta Francorum* speaking of gods, and of oaths taken by Muhammad as a god.¹⁸⁰ For Sigebert of Gembloux (d.1112), 'this is the Muhammad to whom the Gentiles, hitherto offer the worship of a deity.'¹⁸¹

For the Medieval English historian, Mathew Paris:

'A sort of infernal lightning, which, however, descended from the skies, had suddenly set fire to and destroyed the temple of Mahomet, together with his statue; and that again a second explosion similar to the first, had reduced the said temple to small bits; and that a third had, as we believed, thrust the ruins into an abyss in the earth. After this, he said, this fire, which burned with a most devouring heat, though it did not give a bright light, crept along under the earth, like the fire of hell, consuming even rocks in its way, and could not even yet be extinguished. And thus the whole city of Mecca, and the country in its vicinity, were consumed with inextinguishable fire.'¹⁸²

Tancred (a crusade leader) was heard in 1099 to have found a silver idol of the Prophet in the Temple of 'the Lord,' a fable which was the result of a misunderstanding and mistranslation of the chronicler Fulcher of Chartres, but as Munro points out, taken up by today's scholars.¹⁸³ When the Byzantine Emperor, Manuel I Comnenus (1143-80), sought to show that it is inaccurate to equate Islam with idolatry

¹⁷⁷ *Aymeri de Narbonne, Chanson de Geste*; (Louis Demaison; Paris; 1887), 2 vols.

¹⁷⁸ J.W. Sweetman: *Islam and Christian Theology* (Lutterworth Press; London; 1955), Vol I; Part II. P. 66.

¹⁷⁹ D.C. Munro: *The Western attitude toward Islam during the period of the Crusades; Speculum* Vol 6 No 4, pp. 329-43; pp 331-2..

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ Sigebert of Gembloux, quoted in B.Z. Kedar: *Crusade*; op cit; p. 86.

¹⁸² Mathew Paris' *English History*, vol III, p.231 in J. Dahmus: *Seven Medieval Historians* (Nelson-Hall, Chicago, 1982), p.172.

¹⁸³ D.C. Munro: *The Western*; op cit; pp 331-2.

he became embroiled in controversy with the ecclesiastical hierarchy.¹⁸⁴ Even prominent figures, such as the Bolognese professor of civil law Azo (1150-1230) wrote a commentary on the Code of Justinian that says that 'the pagans, that is the Saracens, worship innumerable gods, goddesses, and indeed demons.'¹⁸⁵

All these depictions conflict with the truth knowing that Islam's first deed was to destroy idols, but such distorted views helped justify the killings of Muslims. Thus, the 'Saracens' in the Song of Roland (who worship Antichrist, Lucifer, Termageunt and Diana among other idols), provide occasions for European heroics. They are there to be killed by Christian knights.¹⁸⁶

The evil nature of Muslims went further according to Western polemicists. In their view, the Muslims are the authors of every evil, hating God and actively seeking Satan; they eat their prisoners, betray their oaths, and sell their own womenfolk.¹⁸⁷ According to the Dominican Missionary, Riccoldo da Montecroce, who went to Baghdad in 1291, Muslims were confused, mendacious, irrational, violent, and obscure.¹⁸⁸ Marco Polo in his Travels (1298)¹⁸⁹ is very tolerant of the Mongols, even full of admiration for them and for Hulagu who had destroyed the Caliphate, and is also full of praise for the idolaters, primarily Buddhists and Hindus.¹⁹⁰ As for the Muslims, he details with pleasure the overthrow of the Caliph in 1258 in Baghdad by Hulagu, and he describes Muslims as treacherous, prone to great sinfulness, and 'as dogs not fit to lord it over Christians.'¹⁹¹ As to their faith, it is the: 'accursed doctrine of the Saracens [is that] every sin is accounted a lawful act even to the killing of every man who is not of their creed.'¹⁹²

The humanist scholar, Petrarch, seeking a role model for crusaders, chose Julius Caesar as the leader to destroy Muslim power:

¹⁸⁴ G.L. Hanson: Manuel I Comnenus and the 'God of Muhammad' A Study in Byzantine Ecclesiastical politics; in J. V. Tolan. Ed: *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam* (Routledge; London; 1996), pp. 55-84.

¹⁸⁵ Azo: *Summa Aurea*, to Cod.1.11; Lyons; 1557; col 7a; in B. Z. Kedar: *Crusade and Mission*; op cit; p. 88.

¹⁸⁶ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; p. 15.

¹⁸⁷ In Jo Ann Hoeppner Moran Cruz: *Popular Attitudes*; op cit; pp. 56-7.

¹⁸⁸ In Z. Sardar; M-W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; p 38.

¹⁸⁹ *The Travels of Marco Polo*; Trans R. Latham (New York; 1958).

¹⁹⁰ In Jo Ann Hoeppner Moran Cruz: *Popular Attitudes towards Islam*; op cit; p. 67.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid; p. 68.

‘If Julius Caesar should come back from the lower regions, bringing with him his former spirit and powers, and if, living in Rome, that is, his own country, he should acknowledge the name of Christ as he doubtless would, do you think he would any longer suffer the Egyptian thief (The Mamluk sultan)... to possess not alone Jerusalem and Judea and Syria but even Egypt and Alexandria.’¹⁹³

Petrarch’s message is that ‘Christians of true valour and courage should not suffer the Holy Land, the Christian patrimony, to be overrun by Muslim thieves.’¹⁹⁴

In the view of Petrarch, Muslims became a metaphor for the dangerous and foreign Asia, so reviled by Ancient Greeks, and they represent barbarism itself. The Christian West, on the other hand, in his view, is the bastion of civilisation, manly courage and decency.¹⁹⁵ As Sweetman notes:

‘The dominant picture [of Muslims], in the minds of the Latins, was of forces of aliens advancing from North Africa and raids which left ruins and burnt out churches and monasteries in Southern France. There is reason to believe that raids of vandals were hardly differentiated from raids of Saracens and it was practically certain that many of the raids of North Africa were of pagan Berbers, whose crimes were laid at the door of Islam because they came from a territory which was within the aegis of Islam, and pagans and Muslims alike were branded with the stigma of idolatry.’¹⁹⁶

Muslims were also regarded as sexually perverse. Sodomy is widely associated with Muslims,¹⁹⁷ and the associated vision of the Muslim is that of a figure of extremes -excessive in zeal, in cruelty, and in sensuality, a picture enduring for centuries.¹⁹⁸ Ademar of Chabannes, a French Monk of the late 10th-early 11th century (989-1034), describes the Muslims as ‘Burning with concupiscence and without modesty, men lie with men, women with women... and people copulate with

¹⁹³ F. Petrarca: *De vita solitaria*; ed. M. Noce; Milan; 1992; p.240; English translation: *The Life of Solitude*; Ed. J. Zeidin; (Urbana; 1924); p. 246.

¹⁹⁴ N. Bisaba: ‘New Barbarian’ or worthy adversary? Humanist Constructs of the Ottoman Turks in fifteenth century Italy; in *Western Perceptions* (Blanks-Frassetto ed); op cit; pp. 185-205; at p. 188.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid; p.189.

¹⁹⁶ J.W. Sweetman: *Islam and Christian Theology*; op cit; p. 60.

¹⁹⁷ In N. Daniel: *The Cultural Barrier* (Edinburgh University Press, 1975), p.166.

¹⁹⁸ J. Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.6.

animals.’¹⁹⁹ Guilbert (of Nogent) (d. ca 1124-30), thus describes the Muslims:

‘. . . The more they abandoned themselves in all ways, as if authorized by heaven itself, to all kinds of excess in these permitted vices, the more they covered up the wickedness of it, in praising the grace of God, who accorded, in his indulgence, these loose times. All the severity of Christianity was condemned and given over to public insults; the teachings of honesty and virtue which had been laid down by the Evangelists were accused of being hard, of being cruel; and on the contrary those that the cow had brought were called the teachings of generosity and were recognized as the only ones in accord with the liberty instituted by God himself. . . . But since they did not place any restraint on the indulgence of the senses, one soon saw them giving themselves up to vices that even the ignorant animals ignore entirely and that are not even decent to mention. . . .’²⁰⁰

From *Le Couronnement de Louis*, we read that people were attracted to Islam by the pleasures of drinking and sexual gratification.²⁰¹ Daniel notes how Western Christendom uses these identifications to explain Islam’s great appeal, an appeal which is due to nothing else, ‘Than to its corruption of souls, offering people sensuous pleasures Christianity would never contemplate to even address.’ Christianity since its early days,’ [Daniel remarks,] ‘had stressed the value of total sexual continence in a way that was foreign to Islam.’²⁰²

Islam, the faith, was viewed as nothing but a heresy. The Eastern Christian, John of Damascus, wrote that there arose among the Arabs a man named Mamed, who became acquainted with the Old and New Testaments, and later, after discoursing with an Arian monk, ‘established his own sect’, which he imagined to be a new religion.²⁰³ Geary notes that the view of Islam as a satanic scheme had its roots in the writings of eighth-century eastern Christian polemicists. Peter the

¹⁹⁹ G. Duby: *The Knight, the Lady and the Priest*; Trans B. Bray; Chicago; 1983; pp. 57-120; in: M. Frassetto: *The Image of the Saracen as Heretic in the Sermons of Ademar of Chabannes*; in *Western Views of Islam* (Blanks-Frassetto ed); op cit; pp. 83-96; at p. 89.

²⁰⁰ D.C. Munro: *Western*; op cit; p.334.

²⁰¹ E. Langlois: *Le Couronnement de Louis*; 2nd rev; Paris; 1966; in Jo Ann Hoeppner Moran Cruz: *Popular Attitudes Towards Islam*; op cit; p. 58.

²⁰² N. Daniel: *The Arabs and Medieval Europe*; op cit; p.230.

²⁰³ John of Damascus: *De Haeresibus, Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 94, 761-71; in G. Von Grunebaum: *Medieval Islam* (The Chicago University Press; 1969), p. 43.

Venerable in turn considered Muhammad in relation to Anus and the Antichrist. In the Prologue to the *Summa* the abbot justified this connection by stating that:

‘In no way could anyone of the human race, unless the devil were there helping, devise such fables. . . . By means of them. . . this Satan had as his object particularly and in every way to bring it about that Christ the Lord would not be believed to be the Son of God and true God, the creator and redeemer of the human race.’²⁰⁴

Another version at how the Prophet (PBUH) acquired his teaching, by Gauthier de Compiègne (12th century,) says that Mohammed was a poor child, but was raised by a baron who made his fortune in Persia, India and Ethiopia, and whose trust Mohammed wins, before a Christian hermit teaches him about the Old and New Testaments.²⁰⁵ In *L'Entrée d'Espagne*, a later poem, the Prophet is described as a former Christian leader frustrated at being denied the Papacy,²⁰⁶ hence driving him to start a new religion. Before then, it was a monk who became a cardinal named Nicolas, who to take revenge on his attackers, makes of the Prophet the instrument of his revenge. Then Nicolas becomes the Prophet himself, hence Mohammed was initially in Rome, celebrated and adulated, but because angry for not having been elected pope, founds a new rival religion.²⁰⁷

The Prophet, according to d'Alverny, becomes the agent of ‘Perverse Jews,’ and also heretic Christians: Nestorians, Jacobites, Arians, etc, depending on who makes the attack on Islam.²⁰⁸

In the middle of the thirteenth century there appeared another biography of Mohammed by the French writer Vincent de Beauvais. In his *Speculum Historiale* he expounded the details of Mohammed's life in such a way that one can easily discern the similarity of this

²⁰⁴ J. S. Geary: Arredondo's *Castillo Inexpugnable de la fee*: Anti Islamic propaganda in the Age of Charles V. in J. V. Tolan. Ed: *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam*, op cit; pp 291-311; at p. 304.

²⁰⁵ Gauthier de Compiègne. *Otia Machometi*. In E. Edelstand du Ménil, *Poesies populaires latines du moyen âge* (Paris, 1977).

²⁰⁶ *L'entrée d'Espagne, Chanson de Geste Franco-Italienne*; ed. A. Thomas; 2 vols (Paris; 1913), I, cii, II, 2444-64.

²⁰⁷ E. Doutte: Mahomet Cardinal, in *Memoires de la société d'agriculture... sciences et arts de la Marne*; Second serie; Vol 1; 2nd part; (Chalons; 1899); pp 233-43.

²⁰⁸ M. T. D'Alverny: Pierre le venerable et la Legende de Mahomet: *A Cluny, Congres Scientifique...* 9-11 July 1949; (CNRS; 1950); pp 161-170; at p. 163. in M.T. D'Alverny: *La Connaissance de l'Islam dans l'Occident Medieval*; ed by C. Burnett (Variorum; 1994).

biography of Muhammad to the account of the life of Anti-Christ.²⁰⁹ In keeping with the myth of Islam as a religion of the sword, Vincent de Beauvais tells us that Mohammed converted people to his faith 'with the sword, force and destruction'.²¹⁰ He maintains that the main method of conversion to Islam was by force: Muhammad seized the possessions of the weak by force and devastated the lands of neighbouring peoples to compel them to convert to Islam. Vincent de Beauvais also shares another traditional stereotype, according to which Islam is the religion of indulging passions.²¹¹ At the same time the world of Islam is for Vincent de Beauvais also an upside-down world, a world of miracles where everything is 'the other way round': during fasting one is allowed to eat and drink, during pilgrimage one is allowed to worship idols, and in Paradise the righteous indulge in idleness and carnal pleasures.²¹² Vincent de Beauvais creates a dual image of the Islamic world-on the one hand it is the satanic world of the Anti-Christ, on the other, the world of miracles.²¹³

The dominant purpose of Christian polemics was to darken the character of the Prophet, once more, through distortions and lies. Hence, in *The History of Charles the Great and Orlando*, the pseudo-Turpin says:

'The Saracens had a tradition that the idol Mahomet, which they worshipped, was made by himself in his lifetime; and that by the help of a legion [of] devils it was by magic art endued with such irresistible strength that it could not be broken.'²¹⁴

Vincent de Beauvais in his *Speculum Historiale* portrays Mohammed as skilled in magic.²¹⁵ Hidlebert of Lemans (d.1133) Archbishop of Tours (France), describes the Prophet trying to prove his divine mission in the eyes of the people by the apparent miracle that 'a

²⁰⁹ S. Luchitskaja: The image of Muhammad in Latin chronography of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; In *Journal of Medieval History*; Vol 26; 2000; pp. 115-26; at p. 123.

²¹⁰ Vincentii Bellovacensis, *Speculum*, Lib. XXIII, cap. LXII.

²¹¹ Ibid, cap. LX.

²¹² Ibid, cap. LX, LXIII.

²¹³ S. Luchitskaja: The Image of Muhammad in Latin chronography of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; In *Journal of Medieval History*; Vol 26; 2000; pp. 115-26; at p. 123.

²¹⁴ In D.C. Munro: *The Western* ; op cit; at pp.331-2.

²¹⁵ Vincent de Beauvais: *Speculum historiale, Bibliotheca mundi* (Douai, 1624), vol. 3, Lib. XXIII.

terrifying bull, secretly tamed and trained by the 'impostor,' kneels before him at his bidding.²¹⁶

Southern explains how a fictionalised negative image of Mohammed grew up in Europe in this period, and 'was elaborated and exaggerated according to expectations as to how such an enemy of Christendom might behave.'²¹⁷ Hence, when Guilbert of Nogent spoke about the Prophet in his *Gesta Dei per Francos*,²¹⁸ he may have garbled his name and pushed him a few centuries forward in time, and could neither separate fact from fiction, still he concluded:

'It is safe to speak of evil of one whose malignity exceeds whatever ill can be spoken.'²¹⁹

Davenport also notes the repeated assertion that the Prophet was subject to epileptic fits, 'to impute that morbid affection to the apostle of a novel creed as a stain upon his moral character.'²²⁰

Like the Messenger, the message, the Qur'an, was attacked by Christian polemicists. Many commentators, Frassetto notes, included slanderous accounts of the life of Mohammed and vehement denunciations of the Qur'an and Islam in their works.²²¹ According to Guilbert of Nogent, it was a book of law which appeared by a false miracle on the horns of a cow (or bull or ox).²²² The Qur'an, according to one of the so-called Cordova martyrs, Eulogio (who was executed for insulting the Prophet in 859, in Cordova,) has for Mary the worst of thoughts. Eulogio says that 'He will say nothing about the horrible sacrilege about Mary (in the text),'²²³ which, of course, can be easily disproved by any reading of the text. Surah 3-verse 42, for instance, says:

'The angels said to Mary: 'Mary God has chosen you and made you pure. He has preferred you above all women.'

²¹⁶ H. Prutz: *Kulturgeschichte der kreuzzuge* (Berlin, 1883), p 81.

²¹⁷ R.W. Southern: *Western*; in John Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession*; op cit; p.6.

²¹⁸ *Gesta Dei per Francos*, bk.1, caput 3 in patrologia latina, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris, 1853), Vol 156; col. 689.

²¹⁹ In R.W. Southern: *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Harvard University Press, 1978); p. 31.

²²⁰ J Davenport: *An Apology for Mohammed and the Koran* (J. Davy and Sons; London; 1869), p. 14.

²²¹ M. Frassetto: The Image of the Saracen as Heretic in the Sermons of Ademar of Chabannes; in *Western Views of Islam* (Blanks-Frassetto ed); op cit; pp. 83-96; at p. 84.

²²² In N. Daniel: *The Arabs*, op cit, p. 233.

²²³ Ibid; p.41.

Such medieval accounts, Sweetman points out, show how the ignorance of Islam persisted, and misconceptions about it have remained profound.²²⁴ Very often, Daniel, adds, Islam suffered untrue accounts which are deliberate, malicious misrepresentations, absurd, based on pure fantasy.²²⁵ C. Meredith Jones concluded that there was no better explanation for these misrepresentations than flagrant fanaticism.²²⁶ Such depictions, however slanderous and based on lies, still went on, unaltered, in the following period.

2. The 'Renaissance' (15th-17th Centuries)

Schwoebel notes how the Crusader views of Islam in the Middle Ages were carried over and perpetuated even 'after the main lines of the medieval world view had crumbled.'²²⁷ Daniel, too, observes how the Europeans inherited from their mediaeval fathers a large and persistent body of ideas about Islam;²²⁸ the same accounts of Islam recurring monotonously. Even travellers, who felt bound to describe Muslim doctrine with the authority of their experience, just repeated statements which had been, or might have been, lifted straight out of medieval accounts.²²⁹ The representation of the Orient in tragedy in that period, for instance, reproduces the usual stereotypes: 'the imbecile cruelty of the rulers; the power of the Imams, and the rushed credulity of the Muslims.'²³⁰ The contemporary Jean Germain, who contributed his fair share in exhorting crusades against the Muslims, wrote in refutation of Islam, one of his best known works being '*Le Debat du Chretien et du Sarrazin*' (Debate between the Christian and the Saracen). In this imaginary debate, held allegedly in the palace of the emperor of the Saracens, Germain attacked the folly of Islam, reviewed the evidence

²²⁴ J.W. Sweetman: *Islam and Christian Theology*; op cit; P. 63.

²²⁵ N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op ct; p.232.

²²⁶ C. Meredith Jones: The Conventional Saracen of the Song of the Geste, *Speculum*; 17; 1942; pp. 201-25.

²²⁷ R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk* (Nieuwkoop; 1967), p. 147.

²²⁸ N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe and Empire* (University Press, Edinburgh, 1966), Preface: xiii:

²²⁹ Ibid; pp. 23-4.

²³⁰ As in the play *Roxelane*; 1643; in P.Martino: *l'Orient dans la Literature Francaise au 17em et 18em siecles* (Librairie Hachette; Paris; 1906), p. 193.

supporting the authenticity of Christ and other arguments in favour of Christianity, and in his view, exposed the motives commonly cited for abjuring Christianity in favour of Islam.²³¹ Schwoebel notes, how, arguing from the assumed authority of the Scripture and the superiority of Christianity, Germain produced but another work of Christian polemic and contributed nothing new to the West's knowledge of Islam nor a more constructive approach to the Muslim world.²³²

Little had changed in comparison with the medieval period, indeed, except that the Islamic fiend was now the Ottoman Turk. Schwoebel notes how:

‘The Turk was viewed as an infidel, a follower of the profane Mohammed, and a pernicious force dedicated to the destruction of Christendom.’²³³

This obsession with the Turks and their vilification will form the focus of the following chapter. Briefly here, it is worth giving a couple of instances of how the Turks were depicted and seen in various parts of the Christian West. The Turk was, for most Frenchmen, according to Rouillard, the symbol of cruelty and lasciviousness.²³⁴ When the ambassadors from Florence led by their venerable Archbishop Antoninus appeared at the papal court on May 24, 1453, Pope Calixtus spoke of his desire to take the offensive against the Turks.²³⁵ After a long eulogy on Calixtus' virtues and fitness for his high office, Antoninus elaborated on the Turkish problem. He denounced the Turks as cruel beasts, blasphemous, and enemies of Christ. Mohammed II (the conqueror of Constantinople), he described as ‘The son of Satan, the perverted enemy of the human race, and the personification of all evil.’²³⁶

In England, the attitude of publicists, the clergy, and statesmen towards the Turks differed very little from literary and popular attitudes.²³⁷ When the news reached England in 1565 that the Turkish siege of

²³¹ Paulin Paris: *Les Manuscrits Francais de la Bibliotheque du roi* (Paris; 1836; Vol I; pp. 83-6. abbe Bugnot: Jehan Germain, eveque de Challon sur Saone; 1436-1460; *Memoire de la Societe d'Histoire et d'Archeologie de Challon sur Saone*; IV; 1863; pp. 377-401; at pp. 394-401.

²³² R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow of the Crescent*; op cit; p. 108.

²³³ Ibid; p. 187.

²³⁴ C.D. Rouillard: *The Turk in French history, Thought and Literature; 1520-1660* (Paris; 1941), pp. 641-5.

²³⁵ R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow of the Crescent*; op cit; p. 37.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ F.L. Baumer: *England, the Turk and the Common Corps of Christendom*; in J.S. Geary: *Arredondo's Castillo Inexpugnable de la fee*; op cit; p 292.

Malta had been lifted, a form of thanksgiving was ordered by the Archbishop of Canterbury to be read in all churches every Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.²³⁸ This special order of services refers to:

‘Our sworn and most deadly enemies the Turks, infidels, and Miscreants... who by all tyranny and cruelty labour to root out not only true religion, but also the very name and memory of Christ our only saviour and all Christianity.’²³⁹

Hostility towards Muslims and their faith continued to be based, as in the medieval period, on distortions and exaggerations. As Blanks points out

‘Deliberate misrepresentations on the part of medieval writers who have access to accurate information has been an enduring issue in the historiography of pre-modern encounters between Europe and Islam.’²⁴⁰

The technique of rejection could hardly be faulted, Daniel observes.²⁴¹ ‘The dogmatic filter,’ he adds, ‘excluded every Islamic idea, except deformed to “prove” a Christian argument.’²⁴² Vitkus expands on this:

‘The early modern image of Islam, as seen through Western eyes, is one that has been radically transformed by time, distance and cultural mediation so that it bears little resemblance to the religion and the culture that it purports to describe. In fact, the representation of Islam in medieval and Renaissance Europe is at times almost the opposite of its alleged original. Through a process of misinterpretation and demonisation, iconoclasm becomes idolatry, civilisation becomes barbarity, monotheism becomes pagan polytheism, and so on. And yet, these twisted stereotypes are, in a sense, real. They are real because, for the vast majority of medieval and early Europeans, they served as the only available means for understanding (or perhaps we should say misunderstanding) Islam. These representations are also ‘real’ in the sense that any such representation has a material and ideological impact as a historical phenomenon: it is a mode of

²³⁸ S. C. Chew: *The Crescent and the Rose* (Oxford University Press; 1937), p. 443.

²³⁹ *A Short form of Thanksgiving to God...* ed by W. K. Clay (Cambridge; 1847), pp. 532-33.

²⁴⁰ D.R. Blanks: *Western Views of Islam in the Pre-modern Period: A Brief History of Past Approaches*; in *Western Perceptions* (Blanks-Frassetto ed); pp. 11-53; at p. 22.

²⁴¹ N. Daniel: *The Cultural Barrier*; op cit; p.165-6.

²⁴² *Ibid*; p. 166.

perception that shapes the way people think and therefore the way they act.²⁴³

A good instance of how the image of evil Muslims was fanned so as to serve political, or military purposes, was the contemporary work: *Castillo inexpugnable de la fee*²⁴⁴ (The Impregnable Castle of the Faith), written at the behest of Charles V. Geary explains that Arredondo (the author) espoused many of the standard medieval stereotypes of Islam, just as many Renaissance authors, taking their cue from a long list of medievals, resorting to caricature and distortion in their accounts of Islamic religious ideas.²⁴⁵ The *Castillo* pursued a medieval tradition in which particular perceptions and misrepresentations about the Prophet and Qur'anic revelations are rooted in the theological conception of Christian unity.²⁴⁶ Arredondo most certainly borrowed from Antoninus when in chapter 53 he offered an explanation why God permitted the infidels to possess the city of Jerusalem: 'God does not want Christians to sin in the Holy City in which the son of God suffered for the sins of mankind.' At the same time God takes no offence at the presence of the Muslims in that city because, as the author himself put it, 'they are dogs,' and they were allowed to guard the gates of the city by an angry God who was no longer willing to tolerate the sins that proliferated among His flock.²⁴⁷

European visitors to the Muslim lands, under various guises, contributed to distort the picture further. Gunny focuses on Herbert, the attaché to the British Embassy in Persia.²⁴⁸ One of Herbert's claims was that:

'Some men keep a lock on top of the head by which Muhammad may distinguish them from Christians on Judgment day and by which he will lift them to paradise....'²⁴⁹

Herbert also states that it was from his parents that the Prophet: 'sucked knowledge of both religions'. Obviously Herbert was blind to

²⁴³ D.J. Vitkus: *Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam in 16th and 17th century Europe*; In *Western Perceptions* (Banks-Frassetto ed); op cit; pp. 207-30; at p. 207.

²⁴⁴ Published on June 23; 1528 by Juan de Junta; in J.S. Geary: Arredondo's *Castillo*; op cit; p. 292..

²⁴⁵ J.S. Geary: Arredondo's; p. 292.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid; p. 303.

²⁴⁸ A. Gunny: *Images of Islam in Eighteenth Century Writing* (Grey Seal, London, 1996), p.11.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

the fact that the Prophet was an orphan. Herbert also holds that the Prophet, although circumcised, was baptized by Sergius, a 'Sabeeian heretic who denied the Trinity'. With such 'help' the Prophet 'concocted' the Qur'an and by money and force subjected the rest of his followers.²⁵⁰ Herbert adds that all Muslims invoke the Prophet four times a day, and expect his coming patiently.²⁵¹ Of course, this has no validity as any person can find by reading about Islam.

The Capucine friar, Gabriel de Chinon, visited Isfahan in the 1640s, learned Armenian, Turkish, Persian and other oriental languages, and set up a mission of his order at Tauris and another in the mountains of Kurdistan. Like many of his peers, he played on the Sunni-Shia differences, and gave them a more apocalyptic dimension. In his observations, the first three caliphs-Abu Bekr, Omar, and Uthman are made to appear like vile schemers who bribed people to join their party.²⁵² Chinon makes the claim that Omar choked Abu Bekr to death because he wanted to make amends for Ali.²⁵³ Nothing of the kind happened, of course, Abu Bekr proclaiming Omar as his successor after consultation with leading figures. Chinon also makes the ridiculous claim that the Persians invoke Ali to their help in preference to God himself.²⁵⁴

The Roman Catholic missionary to the Levant, father Michel Nau (1631-83), who was superior of the Jesuit mission in Aleppo, in his book *L'Etat Present de la Religion Mohametane*, praises Muslims for destroying idolatry, but accuses them of substituting their own idol. To him, Muslims simply merge all their idols into one which they elevate according to their whim and which is the image of a false god.²⁵⁵ Most Muslims imagine Him to be corporeal, and when Muslims sometimes call Him a pure spirit, they do so in complete ignorance and that at their best they take a spirit to mean nothing more than light.²⁵⁶ Nau considers the Muslims as the most debauched of all people, and whilst there are Muslims of honour and moral integrity, they are only a minority, and this goodness is not the result of their religion but of their own natural goodness.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid; p. 26.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ M. Nau: *L'Etat present de la Religion Mahometane*; (Paris; 1684); Vol 1; p. 65.

²⁵⁶ In A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 27.

²⁵⁷ Ibid; p. 28.

Much that was imputed to Islam arose, indeed, in the imaginations of European writers.²⁵⁸ Chew points out the absurd writing about the Qur'an seemingly including stories of beasts saluting Mahomet and of the moon descending from heaven to visit him.²⁵⁹ The Qur'an contains no such stories.

'The currency of these and other fables,' [Chew explains,] 'shows that hostile writers seldom troubled to acquaint themselves with the Latin text; and if they did so their prejudice blinded them to the beauty and grandeur which would else surely have glimmered, albeit obscurely, through the unworthy rendering of the original.'²⁶⁰

Kabbani also explains how:

'The Elizabethan stage, preoccupied as it was with the melodramatic, the passionate and the violent, drew heavily on the available stock of eastern characters so vivid in the public imagination.²⁶¹ The Saracen, the Turk, the Moor, the Blackamoor and the Jew were key villains in the drama of the period, crudely depicted as such by the lesser playwrights, but drawn with more subtle gradations by a Marlowe or a Shakespeare. Although Shakespeare 'whitewashes Othello by making him a servant of the Venetian state, a soldier fighting for a Christian power, and most importantly, a killer of Turks, he still remains a savage - although a somewhat noble one. His excitable nature and his passionate instincts flaw him: his jealousy recalls a long tradition of Eastern jealousy, his revenge a confirmed consequence of that tradition. The play ultimately condemns the idea of inter-racial sex, for such intercourse can only lead to tragedy, upsetting as it does the fixedness of the status quo.'²⁶²

In Milton's *Paradise Lost* (published in 1667), Evil comes from the East: Satan is an Oriental monarch (Lucifer the shining one - The Eastern Morning star) whose proud ambition was to defeat God and the angels is analogous to the aggressive imperialism of Eastern

²⁵⁸ N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; op cit; p. 23.

²⁵⁹ Burton: *The Anatomy of Melancholy*; III; iv; i.3; in S.C. Chew: *The Crescent*; op cit; p. 438.

²⁶⁰ S. C. Chew: *The Crescent*; p. 438.

²⁶¹ See: E. Jones: *Othello's Countrymen*: (London; 1965); S. Chew: *The Crescent and the Rose*; op cit.

²⁶² R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; pp.19-20.

emperors such as the Ottoman sultan. According to this pattern of association, the West is angelic, the East is demonic.²⁶³

An image the Christian West has always associated with Islam and Muslims is violence towards women. As Kabbani observes:

‘The cruelty of the Oriental in narrative construction went hand in hand with lasciviousness. One favourite example that reappears with great frequency during this period is the story of the Turkish sultan who falls in love with a slave girl, so that he abandons all matters of state to her embraces.’²⁶⁴ Rebuked by his ministers and officers, who press him to attend to his army about to engage in battle, he is only enraged at their meddling. One evening, he bids his lover dress in her most revealing silks and attend to him at a banquet. He embraces her before his courtiers, then abruptly draws his sword and cuts off her head. Another version has him bid his ministers into his bedchambers, where he lifts the bedclothes to reveal to them the charms of his mistress. This done, he stabs her to death, and marches off to war.’²⁶⁵

Sexual excesses are also emphasised in Western accounts of the Muslims. The notion of a veiled, hidden lust that masquerades as virtue and chastity is typically a characteristic of the Islamic woman in Western European texts.²⁶⁶ The virtuous Muslim woman often converts to Christianity ‘saved’ by the love of a good Christian man.²⁶⁷ Sexual perversity is seen to be intrinsic in the teachings of Islam.²⁶⁸ Hence, George Lengherand, mayor of Mons in Hainault, who visited Palestine and Egypt in 1486, stated that:

‘Muslims believed blessedness consisted of food, drink, luxuries, and in all sensualities, and pleasures which excite the body, even sodomy. Mohammed decreed that those who did not live in such pleasures would perish... and His Alcoran was full of errors. I believe it is the greatest horror in the world.’²⁶⁹

²⁶³ In D.J. Vitkus: *Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam in 16th and 17th century Europe*; In *Western Perceptions* (Banks-Frassetto ed); op cit; pp. 207-30. p. 219.

²⁶⁴ N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe and Empire*; Edinburgh 1966; p. 18.

²⁶⁵ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; p. 19.

²⁶⁶ D.J. Vitkus: *Early Modern Orientalism*; op cit. p. 223.

²⁶⁷ D. Metlitzki: *The Matter of Araby*; op cit; pp. 177 ff.

²⁶⁸ Z. Sardar; M-W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; p.41.

²⁶⁹ *Voyage de George Lengherand*, ed Charles Denys (Mons, 1861), pp. 181-2.

Christian writers not only criticised Islam for offering sensual pleasure as a reward to the virtuous in the next life, they also condemned the sexual freedom allowed in this life under Muslim law.²⁷⁰ Islamic regulations governing concubinage, marriage, and divorce were at once misunderstood and reviled by Western Europeans.²⁷¹ Alexander du Pont in his *Roman de Mahomet* maintains that the Prophet (PBUH) permitted every Muslim to marry ten wives and every Muslim woman to marry ten times as well.²⁷²

In the view of Western Christian polemist, the progress of Islam could only be due to sexual permissiveness combined with violence. Islam, as Vitkus notes, was defined and caricatured as:

‘A religion of violence and lust-aggressive jihad in this world, and sensual pleasure promised in the next world. But if the doctrines of Islam were so obviously worthy of scorn, what could account for the widespread, rapid growth of Islam? Force of arms and successful military aggression, violent conversion by the sword - these are often cited by Christian writers in the early modern era as an explanation for the astonishing achievements of the Islamic conquests. The early Arab Muslims are described as powerful bandits and plunderers united by a voracious appetite for booty.’²⁷³

In the view of Pope Pius II (Pope 1458-1464), Islam was a pernicious force, incompatible at all points with Christianity and dedicated by its very nature to the overthrow of the Christian religion.²⁷⁴

A number of techniques were used to distort the reality of Islam and Muslims. Some of these techniques are studied by Holt through the writing of Prideaux. Prideaux, Dean of Norwich (d.1724), compiled his work on the Prophet: *The True Nature of Imposture etc*, completed in 1697.²⁷⁵ Prideaux presents an apparently well documented work, so that he ‘...may not be thought to draw this Life of Mahomet with design to set forth his imposture in the foulest of colours the better to make it serve (his) present purpose.’²⁷⁶

²⁷⁰ D.J. Vitkus: *Early Modern Orientalism*: op cit; p. 223.

²⁷¹ N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*, op cit; pp.135-40.

²⁷² Ibid; p. 145.

²⁷³ D.J. Vitkus: *Early Modern Orientalism*; op cit; p. 217.

²⁷⁴ R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow of the Crescent*; op cit; p. 72.

²⁷⁵ P.M. Holt: *The Treatment of Arab History by Prideaux; Ockley and Sale*. In *Historians of the Middle East*; Ed B. Lewis and P.M. Holt (Oxford University Press; London; 1962), pp. 290-302. pp. 291-4.

²⁷⁶ Ibid; p. 293.

In his account Prideaux lists 36 Arab authors or works, and makes great display of their names in his footnotes. This, of course, seeks to give his work legitimacy. However, as Holt observes, upon examination, it becomes clear that his knowledge of them was second hand, either from translations or quotations in the works of Orientalists. Together with these ‘Arabic’ sources, Prideaux uses the writings of anti Muslim controversialists. Thus, as Holt notes, the resulting biography is a combination of Muslim tradition and Christian legend, ‘inspired by a sour animosity towards its subject.’²⁷⁷ And commenting on Prideaux’s work, Daniel holds that it ‘outdoes almost any medieval writer in its virulence.’²⁷⁸

Distorting the reality of Islam and Muslims, then, as today, was acceptable as long as it served to justify the military onslaught on Muslims. This was all the more laudable as it brought Christians together in the same fight, as here expressed by the French propagandist La Noue:

‘I know we have some religious controversies in religion amongst us (Christians), which notwithstanding Protestant and Catholics are still brethren and grafted upon oneself... But with these profane Mahumatists, who worship an imaginary God, which is rather a devil and do pollute all honesty and sack the world, what conjunction and fellowship can we have? Against these enemies the ravishers of our goods, tormentors of our bodies, and poisoners of our souls are we to strive with our swords. But amongst those that bear one safe till all controversies ought to be ended in modesty and truth.’²⁷⁹

3. The 18th Century

In this supposed age of enlightenment, of better knowledge of Islam, and supposedly of better attitudes to Muslims and their faith, still, as in the previous periods, Muslim fanaticism, violence, cruelty, ignorance,

²⁷⁷ Ibid; p. 294.

²⁷⁸ N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; p. 309.

²⁷⁹ F. La Noue: *The Politicke and Militarie discourse of the Lord de la Noue*; tr. E. A. London; p. 290.

cunning, deceit, sexual perversion, and religious heresy take centre stage in Western depictions.

Abbe (Abbot) Jean Luis Poiret (1757-1834) published his *Voyage en Barbary* (Travel to Barbary) in 1789.²⁸⁰ He found that the Muslims had a limited view of destiny, on the grounds that they made it apply to physical events and rarely to moral acts. Attached to the outward ritual of their religion, they indulged in ferocious deeds proper to their personality, without giving heed to the amorality of their actions.²⁸¹ Poiret saw a number of contradictions in the actions of these 'ignorant and coarse people,' arising from the total lack of moral foundations for their acts, the Muslims in his eyes, reminiscent of primitive people still in the state of nature as described by Rousseau in his *Discours sur l'Inegalite*.²⁸²

In his *Voyage au Levant* (Travel to the East), Paul Lucas says that he witnessed the execution of two Muslims convicted of theft, condemned to be burned alive in a public place.²⁸³ This, as Gunny notes, might well be a figment of his imagination, for this is certainly not an Islamic punishment.²⁸⁴

In *An Account of South West Barbary*, translated by Ockley,²⁸⁵ Muslims are described as 'insufferably false and treacherous that neither their word, nor their oath, can be depended upon from the first to the last.'²⁸⁶ The author shows great interest in the fate of women, stating that they are taught nothing by their parents other than to bake a little bread, clean their houses and serve their husbands who treat them like handmaidens rather than wives. Women themselves are conspicuous for their amorality for in spite of their strict upbringing, they have 'will and invention enough to procure a great many opportunities favourable to their inclinations.'²⁸⁷ According to the same author, the reason why Muslims do not lend money on interest is not the Qur'anic injunction against usury, but tax evasion. They appear poverty stricken, not only because of their want of industry, but also

²⁸⁰ J. L. Poiret: *Voyages en Barbary ou lettres ecrites de l'ancienne Numidie pendant les annees 1785-6*; (Paris; 1789).

²⁸¹ Ibid; p. 105.

²⁸² A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; pp. 32-3.

²⁸³ P. Lucas: *Voyage au Levant*, (The Hague; 1705); 2 vols..

²⁸⁴ A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 36.

²⁸⁵ Ockely tr: *An Account of South West Barbary*, (London; 1713).

²⁸⁶ Ibid; pp. 33-4.

²⁸⁷ Ibid; p. 34.

because the appearance of affluence might lead to their being more severely taxed if not robbed of all their possessions.²⁸⁸

As in previous periods, the generalised view was that Islam was nothing more than a heresy based on violence and sexual permissiveness. According to Prideaux and others, the Prophet gratified the Arabs':

'Passions and corrupt affections which he found them strongly addicted to, especially those of lust and war. In this way he found it easier to draw them into his party.'²⁸⁹

In his *Memoires*,²⁹⁰ Prevost holds that the Turks, Moors and corsairs do not just have a shadowy existence, and an obsession for plunder, but also express sexual pleasures and cruelty, and all at once.²⁹¹ Antoine Galland, in his travels to the East, concentrated his attention on the manifestations of violence that were supposedly intrinsic to the East. The violence of the East is often linked with sexuality.²⁹² This was a common theme of European travel writing: the all invasive seraglio with its crimes of passion was never far from the traveller's mind.²⁹³

Jean Andre Peyssonnel (1694-1759) visited the regencies of Tunis and Algiers in 1724-5, and wrote his impressions in the form of letters, which were published in 1838.²⁹⁴ Peyssonnel notes that women who have been found guilty of adultery with their Christian slaves are drowned in the sea. He also says that Christians are forced to abjure their faith and to become Muslims, otherwise they can be condemned to death - unless the matter can be hushed up with money.²⁹⁵ This is a similar view to Voltaire's articles to the *Memoire* in 1745 based more on imagination than experience.²⁹⁶

J.G. De Saint-Sauveur emphasises amongst the Muslims of North Africa the vice of lust:

'The Turks and Algerians, not anxious for large families, behave as true pirates on the marital bed. They ravage the field of sensual delight without making any effort to have them bear fruit. The women, resigned to their fate, suffer further insults

²⁸⁸ In A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 39.

²⁸⁹ Prideaux; Parley in D.A. Pailin: *Attitudes to Other Religions*; (Manchester University Press; 1984); p. 101.

²⁹⁰ A. Prevost: *Memoires pour servir a l'Histoire de Malte* (Paris; 1741).

²⁹¹ A. Prevost: *Memoires*; in A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p.170.

²⁹² R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; p. 25.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ J.A. Peyssonnel: *Voyages dans les regences de Tunis et d'Alger*; (1838).

²⁹⁵ In A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 32.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

since almost none of these petty sultans, taking Jupiter of Greek mythology as a model, hesitate to abandon Hebe for Ganymede.²⁹⁷

Abbe (Abbot) Vincent Mignot wrote *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman* etc, to the year 1740.²⁹⁸ In it, amongst others, he insists that Muslims behave towards their womenfolk like the savage idol-worshippers do towards their deities. They lavish presents on them, but they also ill-treat and worship them. Mignot tells other scurrilous tales about Islam and the Qur'an, asserting that Islam owes its expansion to such tales and its huge armies which subjugated many empires.²⁹⁹ The impression was that a religion that gave full indulgence to the ambition, the lusts and cruelty of mankind, could not fail to gain proselytes.³⁰⁰

Muslim women are not free from censure, of course. Venture, for instance,³⁰¹ asserts categorically that there is no such a thing as delicate women (or men) amongst the Muslims.³⁰²

Violence, sexual perversion and also despotism, which is their complement, all coalesce in the harems and households of the Muslim world. As Cirakman sums up in relation to Western views of the Turks:

'In the eighteenth-century images of Turkish women, one can perceive that the free-spirited and virtuous character of European women is not only contrasted with the stupid and sly Oriental women, but also with Turkish men who appear to be silly, weak, corrupt and despotic. Although the images of Oriental women somehow attempt to entertain the reader, they also tell about the scope of despotism and complete its depiction. From the diverse images of Turkish women one can perceive that despotic power encompasses every aspect of society to such an extent that even a plain Turkish man, who could be at the lowest level of the hierarchical order, could enjoy despotic power over somebody, such as his wife and

²⁹⁷ J.G. De Saint-Sauveur's *Encyclopedie* in L. Valensi: *North Africa Before the French Conquest; 1790-1830*; tr. by K. J. Perkins (Africana Publishing Company; London; 1977), p. xx.

²⁹⁸ V. Mignot: *L'Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman depuis son origine jusqu'a la paix de Belgrade en 1740*; (Paris; 1771).

²⁹⁹ In A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 173.

³⁰⁰ F. Atterbury: *Sermons and Discourses*; I; p. 130; in D.A. Pailin: *Attitudes*; op cit; p. 101.

³⁰¹ J. Michel Venture de Paradis: *Memoires sur la Barbarie en general* (Paris; 1983).

³⁰² Manuscript. BN, Fonds Francais 6430, commentary on f.76 at f.162. In. A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p.193

children. These are assumed to be his slaves. Despotism as an Oriental mode of living is in fact assumed to be a complete system of oppression in which there is no position from which one can act with free will. In eighteenth-century thought about the Turks, every observation seems to affirm the logic of despotism and every analysis attempts to show that it could not be otherwise.³⁰³

Just as in previous periods, the character assassination of the Prophet takes centre stage.³⁰⁴ The generalised view was that he led Muslims on the path of violence, Islam's use of the sword contrasting with Christianity, 'the religion of love', violence explaining the progress of Islam. The 'religion of Mohammed,' according to Tillotson, 'is famously known to have been planted by force at first, and to have been maintained in the world by the same violent means.'³⁰⁵ In *Les Ruines*, Volnay says that 'Mohammad succeeded in building a political and theological empire at the expense of those of Moses' and Jesus' vicars'; or, in the scene where he has an imam speaking about 'the law of Mohammad',

'God has established Mohammad as his minister on earth; he has handed over the world to him to subdue with the sabre those who refuse to believe in his law'.³⁰⁶

Volnay denounces the 'apostle of a merciful God, who preaches nothing but murder and carnage', the spirit of intolerance and exclusiveness that 'shocks every notion of justice'; and that Christianity might be irrational, but it was gentle and compassionate.³⁰⁷

Rousseau wrote in 1762 a letter to Christophe de Beaumont, in which he expressed the most hostile views towards Islam.³⁰⁸ He invented a story of a Parsee of Surat who secretly married a Muslim woman, was arrested and condemned to death for refusing to be converted to Islam. The dying Parsee starts by attacking the polygamy of Muslims, then he hopes to be reborn among Muslims in order to teach them to become humane, forbearing and just. He accuses them of being blind in their

³⁰³ A. Cirakman: *From the Terror of the World to the Sick man of Europe*; (Peter Lang Publishing; New York; 2002); p. 163.

³⁰⁴ D.A. Pailin: *Attitudes to Other Religions*; op cit; p. 91.

³⁰⁵ Tillotson: Works; I; p. 148; in D. A. Pailin: *Attitudes*; p. 103.

³⁰⁶ Volnay: *Les Ruines*; in Z. Sardar; M.W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; pp. 46-7.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ J.J. Rousseau: *Oeuvres Completes* (B. Gagnebin and M. Raymond eds: Paris; 1964).

zeal, of tormenting God's servants and of being cruel and bloodthirsty.³⁰⁹

Eighteenth-century, supposedly enlightened minds, without exception, still held views about Islam that contradict reality. Thus, in his letter 67 (of his work *Lettres Persannes*), Montesquieu holds that the:

'Mohammedan faith deprives women of their freedom, ... and Mohammedanism locked women behind bars... and had that religion conquered the earth, women would have been imprisoned everywhere.'³¹⁰

In letter 24, he asserts that this religion (Islam) is so much

'...Discriminating against women, that they are not just forbidden to read the scriptures, but also that they were not to enter paradise because of their sex.'³¹¹

Obviously, Montesquieu shows little knowledge of the Qur'an. Among several verses referring to women having their reward in paradise is one in Surah 4 (known as Surah an-Nisa – the Women) verse 124:

'If any do deeds of righteousness - be they male or female - and have faith, they will enter Heaven, and not the least injustice will be done to them.'

The French work *Difficultés sur la Religion* etc, makes countless false assertions about Islam such as in the eighteenth *verité* (truth) where it implies that Muslims carry out circumcision as a holy act, which the rest of the world finds absurd as it finds absurd the burning of widows in India.³¹² In the author's mind, the Muslims, by believing that circumcision pleases God and that ablution cleanses sin, attribute a weakness to God. The author also asserts that Islam is responsible for the destruction of morality and true virtues, and amongst others also claims that the Qur'an excludes women from paradise.³¹³

Alexander Ross, in his *Pansebeia*, dated from the last decade of the 17th century, insists that the Muslims worship the sun and the moon,³¹⁴ which, of course, is not the case.

³⁰⁹ In A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 130.

³¹⁰ Montesquieu; *Pensees*; p. 508; 1622. in Pauline Kra: *Religion in Montesquieu's Lettres Persanes*; Institut et Musée Voltaire (Geneve; 1970), p. 113.

³¹¹ Montesquieu: Letter 24; in P. Kra: *Religion*, op cit; p. 114.

³¹² R. Mortier ed: *Difficultés sur la religion proposees au Pere Malebranche*; (Brussels; 1970); p. 113.

³¹³ In A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 103.

³¹⁴ A. Ross: *Pansebeia, or A View of All Religions in the World*; London; 6th ed (1696); pp. 118 ff.; in D.A. Pailin: *Attitudes*; op cit; p. 82.

Herbelot in *Bibliothèque Orientale*,³¹⁵ claims that when Muslims ‘refer to the Trinity, they easily accept that the first person - the father - is the essence of God, the second person - the Son - is wisdom and that the third -the Holy Ghost- is life.’³¹⁶ This is utterly wrong, for one of the main dividing lines between Islam and Christianity is this matter of Trinity, as in Islam the Oneness of God is absolute, and Mohammed and Jesus are Prophets only.

Herbelot also holds that ‘Muslims believe that most mad people are saints and that some wisdom resides in madness.’³¹⁷ Herbelot ought to have known that in Islam, there is no sainthood, and mad people are not even allowed in mosques let alone listened to for their wisdom.

Boulanger writes³¹⁸ that everything took place on the tenth day of Muharram for the Persians: the floods, the same day the Qur’an was sent from heaven, and Hussein, Ali’s son was killed at Kerbala by Omar’s followers.³¹⁹ All of this, of course, has no true historical foundation, for neither was Hussein killed by Omar or his followers, but instead was killed during the Umayyad rule (which began in 661, whilst Omar died in 644), and even more importantly, the Qur’an was not revealed in one day but in phases during the Prophet’s life in Makkah and Madinah.

In his article, ‘Sarrasins,’ in the *Encyclopédie*, Diderot gives more credentials to the Western views, such as the fatalistic nature of Islam. He insists that the Prophet himself preached fatalism, a doctrine responsible for great courage and contempt for death and which teaches that prudence is useless.³²⁰ This, of course, as Gunny notes, is completely wrong, for the Qur’an vigorously opposes fatalism, with its excuses for evading duties imposed by Divine law.³²¹

Volnay in *Voyage in Egypt and Syria*,³²² asserts categorically that Islam fails to fix the obligations or rights of individuals, groups and classes.³²³ This, of course, is contradicted by the Qur’an. The index on

³¹⁵ B. Herbelot: *Bibliothèque Orientale* (Paris; 1697), (The Hague; 1777).

³¹⁶ In A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 52.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ N.A. Boulanger: *L’Antiquité Devoilée par ses usages* (Amsterdam; 1766).

³¹⁹ Ibid; p.99.

³²⁰ Diderot and J. d’Alembert eds: *Encyclopédie*; (Paris, 1751-1780); 35 vols; Vol 8; pp. 272-3.

³²¹ A. Gunny: *Images*; op cit; p. 164.

³²² C. Chasseboeuf (Volnay): *Voyage en Egypte et en Syrie* (Paris, Mouton and Co; 1959 ed).

³²³ Ibid; p. 372.

legislation in the Qur'an includes matters such as bequests; arbitration, blood-money, bribery, charity, contracts, children etc...³²⁴

Concluding on such distorted depictions of Islam by Christians, Pailin observes:

‘With a few exceptions, Islam is examined in order to show that it is inferior to Christianity and offers no plausible threat to the various proofs of the truth of Christian revelation. Christian apologists are not interested in establishing and stating the truth about Muslim faith and practice. They use or abuse Islam in order to support their own convictions about the perfection of Christianity and to exhort their fellow believers to a better practice of their faith.’³²⁵

Thus, there was little change in comparison with the past or with what was to follow in subsequent centuries.

4. The 19th & 20th Centuries

This period corresponds to the age of empire, an empire that was built on the notion of the Western ‘civilising mission’ of the Muslim lands. Westerners, indeed, sent their armies to the Muslim world, as they held, ‘not to loot, kill, and destroy Islam, but to bring progress, order, freedom, and civilisation to Muslim society.’ In order to justify such a policy, the Islamic world and Muslims had to be shown to be in the grips of a barbaric chaos resulting from their faith, Islam, deemed to be a perverse, violent, false religion, needing removal so that civilisation, at last, can take roots in Muslim society.

One of the vilest societies in Western depictions, which demanded corrective measures, was Algeria’s. Algeria, under Turkish rule, was

³²⁴ M.M. Pickthall: *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an* (Ta ha Publishers; London; 1930), p. 463.

³²⁵ D. A. Pailin: *Attitudes*; op cit; p. 104.

deemed to be the hot bed of despotism and barbarism, a country on which Chevaliers D'Arvieux says:

'This is more or less what I could say about this unpleasant country, which is only peopled by the dregs of the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, and which we can consider without fear of errors as the most unworthy rabble in Africa and as a lair of thieves, which I shall never regret having left.'³²⁶

Rozet describes Turkish rule in Algeria:

'As excessively despotic and the Dey as a 'Despote sanguinaire' (Bloody Despot); he exercised arbitrarily the right of life and death over his subjects until he was unavoidably murdered in one of the many revolts by the army (an undisciplined, rag tag armed gang,) during which blood flowed.'³²⁷

Abbe Raynal describes the degradation and the misery brought about by 'Islamic despotism,' noting that the Muslim 'invaders' destroyed Christian civilisation in North Africa:

'By their genius for destruction and their fanaticism, and replaced it with slavery and tyranny,' and so he calls for a Christian conquest to free Barbary from 'a handful of barbarians.'³²⁸

Pananti, who had resided in the country early in the 19th century, says:

'These degraded people... monsters who vie with each other in the deepest hatred and bitterest hostility towards Christianity and civilisation'.³²⁹

Neighbouring Morocco, equally, was 'much too barbaric to be left without Western enlightenment.' Just prior to the French colonisation (in 1912), a vast literature depicted the retarding influence of Islam on Morocco, and insisted on the need for France to intervene there, and bring back both Morocco and its people into the realm of modernity and progress.³³⁰ For the French historian, Moulieras, the Moroccans

³²⁶ Chevallier d'Arvieux: *Memoires*; R. P. Labat; 6 Vols; (Paris; 1735); Vol V; pp. 288-9.

³²⁷ M.P. Rozet: Alger; in *Algerie par Capitaines du genie Rozet et Carette Etats Tripolitains*; (F.Hoefer; Paris; 1846); p. 14.

³²⁸ Abbe Raynal: *Histoire philosophique et politique des etablissemens et du commerce des Europeens dans l'Afrique*; (Paris; 1826); Vol I; Pp 106 fwd and 137.

³²⁹ F. Pananti: *Narrative of a residence in Algiers*; Tr. E. Blaquier: (London; 1818 F.); p 416.

³³⁰ Well outlined by both M. Garcia-Arenal: *Historiens de l'Espagne, historiens du Maghreb au 19em siecle. Comparaison des stereotypes*; *Annales*; vol 54; 1999; pp 687-

are intolerant fanatics, just like their co-religionists; traitors, and incapable of forming stable government owing to their hostility to authority.³³¹ Authority, if it exists amongst them, is despotism, because it is a theocracy, the sultan being emperor and pope at once.³³² The French review, *Bulletin*, dredged up many stories in the 1890s about the violence in Morocco proving that, truly, the 'Moors' were uncivilised, in need of French guidance'.³³³ Robert de Caix, a journalist, took every opportunity to show Morocco as inhabited by barbarians eager for rape and pillage.³³⁴ De Caix argued strongly that the time had come for France to restore order in the Western Maghrib.³³⁵ France was to bring order and civilisation, the Moroccans having failed due to their attachment to Islam.³³⁶ It was Islam, in the view of the French, which had banned science, and is the source of backwardness, fanaticism, chaos, and fatalism.³³⁷ Therefore, they claimed, it was the duty of France to bring back civilisation, which these parts had been missing through their Islamic history.³³⁸ The Times, just as the French media, such as *Le Matin*, and other journals, cited the total deterioration of the sultan as an effective leader. Most of the stories simply reflected the French position that until the French flag flew over Morocco, there would be no peace or progress in the land.³³⁹ The bombardment of the press overrode the protest against expansionism into Morocco.³⁴⁰ As the French were beginning to occupy Morocco in 1912, most French papers hailed this as the final culmination of a drive to bring modernity and peace to a bloody land.³⁴¹

The same view, but of the East, is held by the American writer Theodore Lothrop Stoddard, who writes:

'This strange new East which now faces us... of a world

703. And J.J. Cook: *The Maghrib through French Eyes; 1880-1929*; in *Through Foreign Eyes*; edited by A.A. Heggoy (University Press of America; 1982), pp. 57-92.

³³¹ A. Moulieras: *Le Maroc Inconnu* (Paris; 1895), pp. 21-3.

³³² Seconzac: *Au Coeur de l'Atlas*; (Paris; 1910); p. 258 in M.Garcia Arenal: *Historiens*; op cit; p. 691.

³³³ J.J. Cook: *The Maghrib*; op cit; p. 76.

³³⁴ *Ibid*; p. 83.

³³⁵ *Bulletin*: Pays Independant: Maroc; XIV 1; (January 1904); p. 23.

³³⁶ A. Moulieras: *Le Maroc Inconnu*; op cit; p. 23.

³³⁷ M. Garcia Arenal: *Historiens*; op cit; p. 691.

³³⁸ A. Dariac in his preface to J. du Tallis; *Le Nouveau Maroc*; (Paris; 1923).

³³⁹ Published accounts in *The London Times*; 19 June 1905; p. 6; 22 June 1905; p. 5; 26 June 1905; p. 4; 28 June 1905; p. 5.

³⁴⁰ J.J. Cook: *The Maghrib through French Eyes*; op cit; p. 85.

³⁴¹ *Ibid*; p. 83.

revolving around a mysterious, fundamentally different, hostile, and rather repugnant nucleus composed of ignorance and savagery that was only restrained by religion, custom, and a small enlightened elite.³⁴²

In an essay entitled *East and West*,³⁴³ Cromer, the British governor of Egypt (late 19th-early 20th centuries), made a table of the most striking differences between the Orient and the West:

Oriental

1. Despotism
2. Government by dependencies
3. Rude system of international law
4. Religious Code
5. Polygamy
6. Seclusion of women
7. Slavery
8. Cruelty in the Infliction of bodily pain.
9. Loose Dress
10. Intricate Alphabet
11. Poetry and Mystical prose

European

1. Free government
2. Direct government
3. Intricate system of international Law
4. Civil Code
5. Monogamy
6. Freedom of women
7. Civil freedom of the Entire community
8. Comparative mildness in the infliction of bodily pain
9. Dress closely fitting the body
10. Simple alphabet
11. Argumentative prose.

Just as Christianity explained the moral and material superiority of European society, Islam, Cromer affirmed, helped to account for the backwardness of the East. Islam was a religion of appeal to primitive peoples.³⁴⁴

Likewise, writing in the missionary organ, the *Moslem World*, W. G. Mombasa held:

‘It behoves each Christian man and woman in this 20th century to do something definite ‘to stem the tide of Muslim advance,’ for the adoption of the faith of Islam by the pagan people is in no sense whatever a stepping stone towards, or preparation for, Christianity, but exactly the reverse. ‘Notwithstanding its fair show of outward observance and its severe legal enactments, there is something in Islam which strikes at the very root of

³⁴² T. Stoddard: *The New World of Islam*; (New York; 1921); pp 129-30; in M. Rodinson: *Europe*; op cit; p.72.

³⁴³ Cromer: *East and West*; in *The Quarterly Review*; 1916; vol 226; pp. 21-39.

³⁴⁴ Cromer: *Modern Egypt*; (New York; 1916); ii; p. 134.

morals, poisons domestic life, and disorganises society. Freedom of judgment is crushed, and a barrier has been raised not merely against the advances of Christianity, but against the progress of civilisation as well.³⁴⁵

Travellers to, and writers on the Muslim world, overwhelmingly gave the same image of both faith and adherents. Lane, for instance, writes that the Egyptians have much religious pride - the name of God is always on their lips - but their behaviour is most inconsistent with their profession.³⁴⁶

‘They exhibit exemplary patience and fortitude, nearly approaching apathy. At the same time they are marked by their cheerfulness, and love amusement. They are most hospitable, but are lacking in gratitude... but their generosity is matched by their cupidity.’³⁴⁷

For Lane, the Egyptians are sexually inflammable, and easily excited to quarrel.³⁴⁸ They are incapable of telling the truth: ‘Constant veracity is a virtue extremely rare in modern Egypt.’³⁴⁹

Eliot Warburton’s *The Crescent and the Cross*, was a very popular work, and was edited eighteen times, the last as late as 1888. Warburton describes the Egyptian fundamentally as ‘sensualist and a slave.... He is only to be a subject in the basest of all kingdoms.’ The women have all the insipidity of children without their innocence or sparkling freshness. Their beauty, voluptuous and soulless, appeals only to the senses.’ As for the male:

‘The Muslim purchases his wife as he does his horse; he laughs at the idea of honour and of love.’³⁵⁰

Kinglake in his work *Eothen* speaks of the intimidation that his dragoman, Dhemetri, a Middle East Christian of Greek origin, used as the only pragmatic means of gaining provisions and accommodations among the strange barbarians. Dhemetri resorted on occasions to the use of the horsewhip, and his tone in dealing with the Muslim Arabs, Kinglake relates, was not only firm and resolute, but at times ‘very violent and even insulting... This tone, which I always disliked,

³⁴⁵ W.G. Mombasa: Islam is not a stepping stone towards Christianity; *The Moslem World*; vol 1; pp. 365-72; at p. 372.

³⁴⁶ E.W. Lane: *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London; 1836).

³⁴⁷ Ibid; vol 1; pp. 377 ff.

³⁴⁸ Ibid; p. 305.

³⁴⁹ Ibid; p. 304.

³⁵⁰ E. Warburton: *The Crescent and the Cross* (New York; Wiley and Putnam; 1845), I; p. 65 f.

though, I was fain to profit by it, invariably succeeded.³⁵¹ But Kinglake salves his conscience a bit, and excuses Dhemetri, by pointing to the causes of his behaviour:

‘He had lived for the most part in countries lying under Muslim governments and had witnessed (perhaps too suffered from) their revolting cruelties; the result was that he abhorred and despised the Mahometan faith and all who clung to it.’³⁵²

Kinglake concludes of the Middle East:

‘Behind me I left an old and decrepit world - religions dead and dying - calm tyrannies expiring in silence - women hushed and swathed and turned into waxen dolls - love flown and in its stead mere royal and ‘Paradise’ pleasures.’³⁵³

Islam, itself, just as in previous centuries, was deemed as nothing but a corrupt heresy, an opinion reinforced on the scholarly level. As Daniel notes, most of the scholars were personally convinced that Islam was inferior in point of morality and the reader of the great 19th-century scholarly lives of the Prophet, by Weil, Muir, Sprenger, Noldeke, Dozy, Goldhizer, found no reason to alter the opinion with which he began.³⁵⁴ Sir William Muir, writing in the last years of the 19th century, thus, says:

‘To put the matter shortly, each religion is an embodiment of its Founder. Mahomet sought power; he fought against those who denied his claims; he put a whole tribe to the sword. He cast aside, when they had served his purpose, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, and he engrafted his faith on the local superstition of his birthplace. He did all these things under cover of an alleged divine authority, but he did no miracle.

The life of Jesus is all in contrast. He spoke and taught as one having the inherent authority in Himself; but He could also say, ‘The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me’. He was holy, harmless, undefiled. He pleased not Himself. Though rich, he became poor, that we through His poverty might become, rich. He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. He was despised and rejected. He humbled Himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.’³⁵⁵

³⁵¹ A. W. Kinglake: *Eothen*; (London; W, Blackwood; 1904); p. 235 ff.

³⁵² Ibid; p. 328.

³⁵³ Ibid; p. 355.

³⁵⁴ N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe and Empire*; op cit; p. 29.

³⁵⁵ Sir W. Muir: *Mahomet and Islam* (London; 1895), pp. 249-50.

The same for J.D. Bate (1836-1923) who served as a missionary in India (1865-1897), and who also contributed many articles to the *Missionary Herald* and the *Baptist Magazine*:

‘The credit for founding Islam is Muhammad’s alone... its distinctive peculiarities are all his own. He alone is responsible for its faults and he alone is entitled to all the credit, whatever it may be, of being its sole founder.’³⁵⁶

The Catholic Cardinal, Newman, in 1853, considered that Islam consecrated nationalism, as Christianity did civilisation. Its partial truth, he said, wrought ‘both a gloom and an improvement in the soul not very unlike the effect which some forms of Protestantism produce among ourselves.’ He held that the ancient and momentous truths embodied in Islam made it ‘undeniably beneficial so far as their proper influence extends, but as a religion, Islam was as debasing as it was false, to the population that received it.’³⁵⁷

Just as in the past, Islam remained in Western view a corrupt, sensual faith. Thus, E.A. Freeman, judges ‘the West to be progressive, monogamous and Christian,’ the East as ‘stationary, arbitrary, polygamous and Mahometan.’³⁵⁸ For Chateaubriand, Muslims spend their time ‘either devastating the world, or sleeping on carpets amidst women and perfumes.’³⁵⁹ Which is also the claim made by J.D. Bate, who says that:

‘Islam succeeded by corrupting its followers. Men had even converted to Islam to indulge their ‘brutal appetites for sexual pleasure...’³⁶⁰

Burton goes one step further, projecting every imaginable kind of sexual perversion onto the Orient, announcing to his contemporaries that whatever they could not find in their Victorian homes, they would find in the Orient, and that whatever was not permissible in England was permissible in Egypt where women are used to being treated as chattel.³⁶¹

In Kabbani’s words:

‘The West argued that Muslims were not only lewd in every day life, but had conceived of a heaven that would permit endless

³⁵⁶ J.D. Bate: *The Claims of Ishmael* (London; W. Allen; 1884), p. 43.

³⁵⁷ In N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe and Empire*; op cit; p. 33.

³⁵⁸ E.A. Freeman: *The History and Conquests of the Saracens* (Oxford: John Henry and James Parker; 1856; London Mc Millan 1876), 3rd ed. pp; i.4.

³⁵⁹ Chateaubriand: *Itineraire de Paris a Jerusalem*; op cit; pp. 908.

³⁶⁰ J.D. Bate: *The Claims of Ishmael*; op cit; pp. 285; 253.

³⁶¹ In Z. Sardar; M.W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; pp. 51-2.

sensual gratifications. The notion of the carnal delights of the Islamic heaven was sharply contrasted, in an effort to mock, with the angelic society of the Christian paradise. Christians were morally refined and longed for a bodiless heaven. Muslims were spiritually coarse and could not envisage bliss that was not corporal.³⁶²

Being sexually perverse apparently does not prevent Islamic society from enslaving women. In 19th century Westerners' eyes, women in Islam are only seen 'in terms of subjection, enslavement and concubinage.'³⁶³ The Oriental men are, thus:

'Cruel captors who hold women in their avaricious grasp, who use them as chattels, as trading-goods, with little reverence for them as human beings.'³⁶⁴

In the writings and paintings of the French Romantics movement, the woman becomes for the fanaticised, brutal Muslim a prize of war and piracy; the Muslim prowling upon her, and ravaging her.³⁶⁵ Thus Helena, heroine of a poem by Alfred de Vigny, is violated brutally by the Turks; an act de Vigny dwells upon in every single, morbid detail. In the *Orientales* of Victor Hugo, all women are prisoners at the Seraglio, and are offered to the beastly delectation of the Sultan. All these women are young and virgin.³⁶⁶ These victims of Turkish beastly desires are generally convent girls kidnapped by pirates (Muslims), and taken to the Harem of the Sultan.³⁶⁷ Countless tales in poems and fiction also speak of women enrobed in sacks and thrown alive into rivers' tumultuous waters,³⁶⁸ and women instantly murdered by their husbands for raising their veils in the sight of another man.³⁶⁹

Muslim men's cruelties towards women hardly absolve Muslim women, who are deemed to be evil due to their faith. Thus, Lord Cromer's view on Muslim women is that due to Islam, they have on the whole a negative influence on others. They could not impart knowledge or moral training to their children. Nor could they instil in the East that refinement of manners which women had created in the West.³⁷⁰

³⁶² R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; pp. 16-7.

³⁶³ In N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; op cit: p. 314.

³⁶⁴ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*, op cit; p. 78.

³⁶⁵ C. Grossir: *L' Islam*; op cit; p. 99 fwd.

³⁶⁶ V. Hugo: *Les Orientales*; 1964; *Les Tetes du Serail*; IV; pp. 602-3.

³⁶⁷ Ibid. *Chanson de Pirates*; p. 619.

³⁶⁸ J. Merimee: *la Double Meprise*; in C. Grossir: *L' Islam*; op cit; p. 102.

³⁶⁹ V. Hugo: *Les Orientales*; op cit; *Le Voile*; p. 625.

³⁷⁰ Cromer: *Modern Egypt*; op cit; ii; p. 155-60.

This remained the overall view shared by the European and American public, including the most learned; the emphasis placed on the Muslim latent and inadequately restrained savagery, and the fanaticism unleashed against the civilising advance from the West.³⁷¹ As a result, colonisation of the Muslim world was deemed the only solution. How Muslim barbarism justified Western colonisation will be amply looked at in the final chapter of this work, but a brief examination of this issue is made here.

For the Frenchman Pelissier, an ardent proponent of the colonisation of Algeria, the only hope of Muslim regeneration was that there should cease to be Muslim governments.³⁷² As Daniel notes, Pelissier always retained the religious basis of his prejudice, believing that if the Turkish sultan adopted the religion of 'the majority of his European subjects, 'it would have startling results.'³⁷³

Bayard Taylor, the 19th century American litterateur, in his work *Lands of the Saracens*, also says:

'What a paradise might be made of this country, were it in better hands!' or more directly: 'Give Palestine into Christian hands, and it will again flow with milk and honey.'³⁷⁴

A contemporary, Shaler, insists:

'True civilisation could only come about by a transfer of responsibility into the hands of Christian nations who would favour agriculture, industry and commerce and thus civilise the region. The 'primitive' was incapable of progressing by its own unaided efforts.'³⁷⁵

Western colonization was not just deemed to bring progress to the Muslim world but also to bring it Christian enlightenment. Missionary literature played a decisive role in devising ways and methods for 'recuperating Muslims' to Christianity. Amongst the many publications, *The Moslem World* retained a leading position, for nearly a century providing a ceaseless stream of articles, comments, advice, etc, on how to 'gain Muslims'. In one such article, the missionary, H.B. Young writes:

'After more than a century of Christian missionary effort in Moslem lands and in the light of the present uncertainties both

³⁷¹ M. Rodinson: *Europe*; op cit; p.72.

³⁷² N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe and Empire*; op cit; p. 331.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Bayard Taylor: *Lands of the Saracens*; New York; Putnam; 1855; p. 129.

³⁷⁵ W. Shaller: *Sketches of Algiers*; Boston; 1826. p.56.

at home and abroad, it would seem wise and logical to consider whether there is any justification for continuing missionary effort in Moslem lands and in the second place to consider, if there are to be missionaries to Moslems, what their function should be.

The Christian witness to Moslems has been astonishingly discouraging down the years. 'We have toiled all night and caught nothing' (Luke 5.5) has often been used to describe the failures of the past decade. At Madras the statement was unequivocally made by the group of thirty five workers among Moslems who met in a special conference that 'the fact stands that Islam remains unresponsive, and that the signs of the times do not point in the direction of change.'³⁷⁶

'The East today is increasingly coming to regard Christ as the norm to which all other religious standards and ideals must approximate. He captures the imagination of the Eastern mind because He is the suffering Servant and not the military leader, because He exemplifies love and sacrifice and service rather than power, worldly gain, and territorial expansion.'³⁷⁷

To be a missionary to the Moslems is perhaps the most difficult assignment given to any ambassador of Christ in the days that lie ahead. It requires all the passion and persuasion, all the prayer and perseverance that can be mustered.'³⁷⁸

In another article, 'A Method of presenting Jesus Christ to the Moslems', the writer held:

'How can I best present my saviour to my Muslim brothers and sisters? This has been the question every missionary must have asked from the earliest days of missionary work. Many methods have been tried with the utmost devotion. Yet we still must all confess with heartfelt regret that the results so far have been meagre. In spite of all the missionary work of the Christian churches, yet proportionately how little, Islam still exerts its influence over three hundred million people created in God's image. Who willeth that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Who is the express Image of God, the only Way to the Father.

³⁷⁶ World Mission of the Church; p. 140; *International Missionary Council*, (New York; 1939).

³⁷⁷ W.W. Cash: *Christendom and Islam*; (Harper and Bros; New York; 1937); pp. 166-7.

³⁷⁸ H. B. Young: The Future Missionary to Moslems; in *The Moslem World*; vol 31; pp. 235-40; at pp. 235-9.

We can all put our finger on various reasons hindering and discouraging Moslems from confessing Christ as their Saviour and many of us are sure that many who have been buried in Moslem graves died with the love of Christ in their heart, as well as we know that there are many living today amongst us outwardly as Moslems who are only waiting to profess openly their faith to Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. Apart from the natural fear of persecution, ostracism, disinheritance and the like, there is another reason discouraging them. The Churches, Eastern and Western, are not showing any desire, in the main, that Moslems should be won and weaned from the power of Satan into fellowship with the one true God.³⁷⁹

As mission sought to salvage Muslim souls, colonial authorities sought to salvage the body and bequeath the Muslim world a 'Westernised liberal' elite that would continue the 'constructive' work of colonisation. This and the problems faced are summed up by Stoddard:

'What I desire to emphasise here' is their (the religious nationalists) pernicious influence on the prospects of a genuine Mohammedan reformation as visualised by the true (liberals) whom I have described. Their malevolent desire to stir up the fanatic passions of the ignorant masses and their equally malevolent hatred of everything Western except military improvements are revealed by outbursts like the following from the pen of a prominent 'Young Turk' [who says]: 'Yes, the Mohammedan religion is in open hostility to all your world of progress. Learn, ye European observers, that a Christian, is in our eyes a being devoid of all human dignity. Our reasoning is simple and definitive. We say: the man whose judgment is so perverted as to deny the evidence of the One God and to fabricate gods of different kinds, cannot be other than the most ignoble expression of human stupidity. To speak to him would be a humiliation to our reason and an offence to the grandeur of the Master of the Universe. The worshipper of false gods is a monster of ingratitude; he is the execration of the universe; to combat him, convert him, or annihilate him is the holiest task of the faithful. These are the eternal commands of our One God. For us, there are in this world only believers and misbelievers, love, charity, fraternity to believers; disgust,

³⁷⁹ A Method of presenting Jesus Christ to the Muslims: *The Moslem World*; vol 37; p. 255.

hatred, and war to misbelievers. Amongst misbelievers, the most odious and criminal are those who, while recognising God, create Him of earthly parents, give Him a son, a mother; so monstrous an aberration surpasses, in our eyes, all bounds of iniquity; the presence of such miscreants amongst us is the bane of our existence; their doctrine is a direct insult to the purity of our faith; their contact a pollution for our bodies; any relation with them is a torture for our souls.

‘While detesting you, we have been studying your political institutions and your military organisations. Besides the new arms which Providence procures for us by your own means, you yourselves have rekindled the inextinguishable faith of our heroic martyrs. Our Young Turks, our Babis, our new fraternities, all are sects in their varied forms, are inspired by the same thought, the same purpose. Toward what end? Christian civilisation? Never!’³⁸⁰

‘Such language, unfortunately, finds ready hearers among the Moslem masses. Although the liberal reformers are a growing power in Islam, it must not be forgotten that they are as yet only a minority, an elite, below whom lie the ignorant masses, still suffering from the blight of age-long obscurantism, wrapped in admiration of their own world, which they regard as the highest ideal of human existence, and fanatically hating everything outside as wicked, despicable and deceptive. Even when compelled to admit the superior power of the West, they hate it none the less. They rebel blindly against the spirit of change which is forcing them out of their old ruts, and their anger is still further heightened by that ubiquitous Western domination which is pressing upon them from all sides. Such persons are as clay in the hands of the Pan-Islamic and nationalist leaders who mould the multitude to their own sinister ends.

Islam is, in fact, today torn between the forces of liberal reform and chauvinist reaction. The liberals are not only the hope of an evolutionary reformation, they are also favoured by the trend of the times, since the Moslem world is being continually permeated by Western progress and must continue to be thus permeated unless Western civilisation itself collapses in ruin. Yet, though the ultimate triumph of the

³⁸⁰ Sheikh ab-UI hak, in Sherif Pasha’s organ, *Mecherouliette*, of August 1912. Quoted from A. Servier: *Le Nationalisme Musulman*; (Constantine; Algeria; 1913).

liberals appears probable, what delays, what setbacks, what fresh barriers of warfare and fanaticism may not the chauvinist reactionaries bring about! Neither the reform of Islam nor the relations between East and West are free from perils whose ominous possibilities we shall later discuss.³⁸¹

Independence came, and despite Western endeavours and those of their chosen elites, Muslim society in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, according to non-Muslim observers, still displays the same 'defects' as before. Many such 'evil' features will be looked at in the subsequent chapters to warrant much detail here except the following extracts by Naipaul, Watt, Rippin, Cox, Marks and Lewis.

Capturing the 'villainy' of Muslim society is V. S. Naipaul, whose depictions carry the legitimacy of being told by a non Westerner. In *An Area of Darkness* (1964), *India: a Wounded Civilisation* (1977), and *Among the Believers* (1981), V.S. Naipaul travels through India first, then through Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia.³⁸² As soon as he enters Egypt, and as expertly as the best Western television or camera lens in the East, he manages to capture the most repulsive acts by the Muslims. On the train to Cairo he observes a man across the aisle as:

'He hawked twice, with an expert tongue rolled the phlegm into a ball, plucked the ball out of his mouth with thumb and forefinger, considered it, and then rubbed it away between his palms.'³⁸³

Still in Egypt he witnesses some ceremony, where people he describes seem to have come out from some dark leper house:

'As disquieting as the blood were the faces of some of the enthusiasts. One had no nose, just two punctures in a triangle of pink mottled flesh; one had grotesquely raw bulging eyes; there was one with no neck, the flesh distended straight from cheek to chest.'³⁸⁴

He reaches a Shia town (Iran) and has this to say:

'It was a town, damp or dusty, of smells: of bodies and picturesque costumes discoloured and acrid with grime, of black, open drains, of exposed fried food and exposed filth; a town of prolific pariah dogs of disregarded beauty below shop platforms, of starved puppies shivering in the damp caked blackness below

³⁸¹ L. Stoddard: *The New World of Islam*; (Chapman and Hall; Ltd; London; 1922).

³⁸² Extracts of Naipaul's views are from R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit.

³⁸³ V.S. Naipaul: *An Area of Darkness*; (London; 1964 and 1981); p. 12.

³⁸⁴ Ibid; p. 127.

butchers' stalls hung with bleeding flesh; a town of narrow lanes and dark shops and choked courtyards, of full, ankle lengthed skirts and the innumerable brittle, scarred legs of boys.³⁸⁵

Naipaul 'understood the sources of the evils of Muslim society': Islam. Muslims' failure in life 'led back again and again to the assertion of the faith.'³⁸⁶ Islam, in his opinion, was merely a refuge from distress,³⁸⁷ that achieved nothing, but was parasitic and uncreative.³⁸⁸ Islam, to him, is

'A religion of fanaticism that leads to a sensation of utter futility; an archaic form of devotion in a rapidly progressing world. It is symptomatic of a renunciation of civilisation that can only marginalize those who are renouncing it by placing them in an intellectual vacuum from which there is no escape. The Islamic alternative to the Western pattern of social behaviour is an aberration, a contemptible failing in sophistication and skill.'³⁸⁹

And in the Muslims' rejection of the West, Naipaul sees:

'Their rage - the rage of a pastoral people with limited skills, limited money, and a limited grasp of the world - is comprehensive. Now they have a weapon: Islam. It is their way of getting even with the world. It serves their grief, their feeling of inadequacy, their social rage and racial hate.'³⁹⁰

The only person Naipaul appreciates in the whole Islamic land is an Indonesian poet, but not a Muslim, an animist instead, with Dutch education, married to a Dutch woman. Unlike the Muslims, all intellectually empty and lost, this Indonesian, Situmorang is:

'Placid and sane. He had achieved that calm by retrieving the heritage of his ancestors with the help of a European anthropologist.'³⁹¹

For his 'profound, erudite, and first class depiction of Islamic society,' Naipaul earned the Nobel Prize, and the greatest literary accolades from the West.

Just as before, in today's Western polemics, Islam still retains its status of false religion, not just being a mere plagiarism of Christianity, but

³⁸⁵ Ibid; p. 123.

³⁸⁶ V.S. Naipaul: *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey*; (London, 1981); p. 85.

³⁸⁷ Ibid; p. 228.

³⁸⁸ Ibid; pp 158-9.

³⁸⁹ In R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; pp. 134-5.

³⁹⁰ V.S. Naipaul: *Among*; op cit; p 214.

³⁹¹ Ibid; p.295.

also including fundamental defects. Montgomery Watt, for instance, says that whilst it is divine, the Qur'an includes errors:

'What other believers in God would hope for would be that Muslims would find a way of maintaining the general truth of the Qur'an, but without denying that in some secondary matters there were slight errors...'³⁹²

Rippin, for his part, holds:

'The earliest non-Islamic source testifying to the existence of the Koran appears to stem from the eighth century. Indeed, early Islamic sources, at least those which do not seem to have as their prime purpose the defence of the integrity of the canon, would seem to witness that the text of the Koran may not have been totally fixed until the early part of the ninth century. Manuscript evidence does not allow for substantially earlier dating either... What Wansbrough has done has been to bring to the study of Islam and the Koran the same healthy scepticism developed within modern biblical studies (and modern studies in general).'³⁹³

The usual other depictions of Muslims: their persecution of women, intolerance, barbaric violence, etc, as will be amply shown in subsequent chapters, have also prevailed to our day. Summing up 'defects of Islamic society' are Baroness Cox and John Marks, who make the following comparison with Western society:

'-In regard to social and political conditions:

Western societies are decentralized. The political, educational, cultural, religious, and economic spheres of human life are partially separated and pluralism is encouraged and realized. There are a number of political parties and free elections by secret ballot.

Ideological traditional Islamic and Islamist societies, on the other hand, are monolithic, intolerant of dissent, and, de facto, lacking in individual freedoms. Control is attempted over all aspects of life in the name of Islam.

-In relation to legal conditions:

In the West, there is a diffusion of power with the partial separation of legislative, executive and judicial processes. Both statute law and common law can be modified and evolve over time as can holy or canon law.

³⁹² W.M. Watt: *Muslim Christian Encounters* (Routledge; London; 1991), p. 137.

³⁹³ A. Rippin: *Muslims, their Religious Beliefs and Practices*; vol 1; (London; 1991); p. ix.

On the Islamic side, no effective checks exist on the exercise of power by the Ulema or the ruling group. The legal system is dominated by the *shari'a* or Islamic Holy Law, derived from the Koran and the hadith (the Prophet's Tradition); there is no other kind of law.

-On the use of force:

In the West, Governments have a monopoly in the use of force for defence against external enemies and to maintain order. This monopoly is subject to and controlled by the powers exercised by the legislature and independent judiciary.

In Ideological Traditional Islamic and Islamist Societies *Jihad* or Holy War is an obligation-imposed by Allah on all Muslims-to strive unceasingly to convert or to subjugate non-Muslims. *Jihad* is without limit of time or space and continues until the whole world accepts Islam or submits to the Islamic state. The use of force internally is subject to the *shari'a*.

-With regard to inequalities:

In the West: There are commitments to equality before the law and to political equality for all citizens. Nevertheless, inequalities of status, opportunity and reward persist.

In Islamic societies: *Shari'a* law requires inequalities between Muslims and: (i) Christians/Jews; (ii) all other non-Muslims; and between men and women. Slavery has been endemic in the Muslim world for centuries and still continues. Substantial inequalities of opportunity and reward persist.³⁹⁴

'Muslim barbarism and violence' constitute, of course, our daily dose nowadays. Bernard Lewis, in an article 'Roots of Muslim Rage,' speaks of the Muslim peril, as paraphrased in the American Atlantic Monthly:

'The struggle between Islam and the West has now lasted fourteen centuries. It has consisted of a long series of attacks and counterattacks, jihads and crusades, conquests and reconquests. Today much of the Muslim world is again seized by an intense and violent resentment of the West. "Suddenly," a distinguished historian (Lewis) of Islam writes, 'America had become the archenemy, the incarnation of evil, the diabolic

³⁹⁴ C. Cox-J. Marks: *The West, Islam and Islamism*; (Civitas; Institute for the Study of Civil Society; London; 2003); pp. 47-9.

opponent of all that is good, and specifically, for Muslims, of Islam. Why?"³⁹⁵

Islam and Muslims, Esposito notes, are, thus,

‘Portrayed as the instigators and protagonists in fourteen centuries of warfare. Islam is the aggressor. Thus in the above statement, Islam and the acts of Muslims are described as aggressive - responsible for attacks, jihads, and conquests-while the West is described as defensive, responding with counterattacks, crusades, and re-conquests. Despite the portrayal of fourteen continuous centuries of confrontation, the reader is informed that “suddenly” America has become the archenemy, evil personified, and so forth. If the contemporary threat is “sudden,” then the reader will logically conclude that Muslims have a historic propensity to violence against and hatred of the West, or else that Muslims are an emotional, irrational, and war-prone people.’³⁹⁶

The following chapters will deal with more depictions and views of Islam and Muslims. What can be concluded here, though, is that today, just as centuries before, the hostile depictions of Islam and its adherents have remained based on fallacies and distortions. Summing up the Western view of Islam, Daniel holds that nonsense was accepted, and sound sense was distorted.³⁹⁷ Attacks on Islam, which Daniel notes, are ‘most divorced from reality, and most remote from any contact with Islam.’³⁹⁸ Bucaille, equally, has concluded that the erroneous statements made about Islam in the West are the result of systematic denigration.³⁹⁹ Lueg insists that the threat of Islam often stems from a limited vision rather than reality, and that anything we hear from the Islamic world, we assume to be stated from an inferior position and in a religious context, i.e., that of Islam.⁴⁰⁰ Van Ess, likewise, points to the anti Islamic clichés, which lie deep in the subconscious and meet with unanimous approval.⁴⁰¹

The aim of the next few chapters is to consider in detail the themes by which the West defines and justifies Muslim barbarism, and to refute

³⁹⁵ B. Lewis: Roots of Muslim rage; *Atlantic Monthly*; 226:3; September 1990; p. 2.

³⁹⁶ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; pp. 177-8.

³⁹⁷ N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; op cit p.302.

³⁹⁸ N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit; p.232.

³⁹⁹ M Bucaille: *The Bible, The Quran and Science*; (Seghers; Paris; 1993); p. 1.

⁴⁰⁰ A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; pp. 28; and 21.

⁴⁰¹ J. Van Ess: Islamic perspectives; in H. Kung et. al: *Christianity*, op cit; p. 6.

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them in turn, showing in the process how such depictions have persisted for centuries, to this day, despite the fact that they are based on little or no credible ground.

Three

WESTERN VIEWS OF THE TURKS

In the most recent and much-hyped historical programme on British television, *The War of the Worlds*,⁴⁰² the presenter, a professor from a British university, devoted his most passionate words to 'Turkish crimes', their genocides of Christians, the first systematic state-organised genocides, he tells us. Whilst his most fiery words were about Turkish extermination of Christians, at no point did he express doubts about Turkish culpability. With equal passion he described the Turkish horrors inflicted on Christians, and in good modern Western tradition, which consists in disappearing or minimizing the victims of Western genocides, and in parallel vastly multiplying the crimes of others, our historian multiplied the numbers of victims at will, even by three times more than those given by older historians such as Toynbee, who himself was no friend of the Turks.⁴⁰³

The eminent professor, of course, was on safe ground here. Any crime by Muslims is, of course, the worst, and there is no doubt that history, i.e. Western history, tells the truth only when it denounces Muslim crimes. This history in most Western academia, or commentators on Islam, is only distorted if it ever makes the cardinal error of praising anything Islamic or in denouncing Western genocides,⁴⁰⁴ which Western academia is overwhelmingly dedicated to removing from knowledge or minimising as much as possible.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰² The War of the Worlds; *Channel Four*; 8 pm. 19 June 06.

⁴⁰³ A. Toynbee referred to in Y. Courbage and P. Fargues: *Christians and Jews under Islam*; (I. B. Tauris Publishers; London; 1999); p. 110.

⁴⁰⁴ See, for instance:

W. Churchill: *A Little Matter of Genocide*; (City Lights Books; San Francisco; 1997).

D.E. Stannard: *American Holocaust*; (Oxford University Press; 1991).

W. Howitt: *Colonisation and Christianity*; (Longman; London; 1838).

⁴⁰⁵ See, for instance, how such denials and their techniques work in:

D E. Stannard: "Genocide in The Americas" in *The Nation*, (October 19, 1992 pp. 430-434); article available on the internet.

W. Churchill: *A Little Matter of Genocide*; op cit.

It is also perfectly normal that we hear of 'Turkish atrocities', and that they should be the worst atrocities committed, this being, of course, in continuity of a long Western tradition. Whilst such 'crimes' were temporarily removed from general attention in the period of the cold war, when Turkey was at the front line in facing the Soviet 'threat', now that such a threat has gone, we are, quite routinely, brought back to hearing and reading about such abominable Turkish monstrosities. 'Turkish barbarism' is contradicted by reality, which shows that Turkish humanity and tolerance have remained unique in history, yet, to this day, we are constantly harassed by the stereotyped, hostile views of the Turks. The rabid reluctance to admit Turkey into the European Union is only a manifestation of the long held hostility to the Turks which this chapter shows, after a brief outline of Turkish history.

1. A Brief History of Ottoman Turkey

During Genghis Khan's invasion of Persia in 1219-21, a small Turkman tribe, of about four hundred families, fled the Mongol conqueror and settled at Surgut, on the Seljuk-Byzantine frontier, under the suzerainty of the Seljuk Sultan.⁴⁰⁶ Orthogrul, their leader, became the soldier and subject of Aladin the Sultan of Rum, and governed fifty-two years both in peace and war. He was the father of Thaman, or Athman, whose Turkish name has been melted into the appellation of Caliph Othman.⁴⁰⁷ Orthogrul was a heathen but his son, Othman, became a Muslim. Curiously enough, Othman was born in 1258, the year of the destruction of Baghdad by Hulagu. The descendants of Othman were to assume the name of Othmanis, a word corrupted in Europe to Ottoman.⁴⁰⁸

In the 14th century the Ottoman armies registered a succession of victories. Othman captured many fortresses before the armies of the emperor moved out against him. Othman pushed his forces nearer the sea, then, gradually he advanced on the second city of the empire,

⁴⁰⁶ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p.220.

⁴⁰⁷ E. Gibbon: *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; Methuen and Co; London; 1923 f. vol 7; p.23.

⁴⁰⁸ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p.220

Nicaea; and slowly he brought up his armies against Brusa, and erected two forts, where for ten years he pressed the siege.⁴⁰⁹ Orkhan, his son, planted the Ottoman flag on its walls, and hastened to Sugut in time to tell the good news to his father (before his death).⁴¹⁰

Under Othman's son Orkhan, the Turks registered further victories. By the 1340s, the whole south coast of the Sea of Marmara and the Adriatic shore, but for a few cities, were in the hands of the Ottomans.⁴¹¹ Orkhan died in 1359. He had lived to carry his arms to the confines of Asia Minor, and had even seen his horse-tails flying on the western shores of the Hellespont. His son, Murad, who was to succeed him, was to lead the Ottoman armies as far as the Danube.⁴¹² In 1371, the Turks crushed an alliance of Serbs, Hungarians, Wallachians and Napolese at the battle of Cernomen.⁴¹³ In 1375, crossing the Balkans, the Turks took Nissa, one of the strongest fortresses of the Byzantine Empire.⁴¹⁴ In 1380 the Turks captured Sofia and Nish, the northern Serb capital. Then, in 1389, the first Great battle of Kosovo took place, where the whole of the Serbian armed nobility was defeated.⁴¹⁵

Bayazid, the new Turkish leader, was known as the Thunderbolt, a title conferred to him on account of the rapidity of his movements in warfare.⁴¹⁶ To crush Bayazid, Sigismund, King of Hungary and brother of the Emperor of the West, together with Pope Boniface IX (Pope 1389-1404) preached a Crusade in 1394.⁴¹⁷ The battle ended in a total disaster for Christian Europe; the elites of many nations were killed, a defeat that spread great dismay amongst their countrymen and the monarchs of Europe.⁴¹⁸

⁴⁰⁹ S. Lane Poole: *Turkey*; (Khayats; Beirut; 1966 ed; originally published in 1908); p. 19.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ D. Vaughan: *Europe and the Turk*; (Liverpool University Press; 1954); p. 10.

⁴¹² S. Lane Poole: *Turkey*; p. 35.

⁴¹³ D. Vaughan: *Europe*; op cit; p. 21.

⁴¹⁴ S. Lane Poole: *Turkey*; op cit; p. 40.

⁴¹⁵ P. Wittek: *The Ottoman Turks, from an Emirate of Marsh warriors to an Empire*; in *Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*; 1965; pp. 33-51; reprinted in *The Islamic World and the West*; Edited by A.R. Lewis; op cit; pp. 106-18; at pp. 114 -5.

⁴¹⁶ Sir Edwin Pears: *The Ottoman Turks to the fall of Constantinople*; in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol IV; Edited by J. R. Tanner, C. W. Previte; Z.N. Brooke, 1923; pp 653-705; p.674.

⁴¹⁷ A.S. Atiya: *Crusade, Commerce and Culture*; (Oxford University Press; London; 1962); p. 148.

⁴¹⁸ E. Pears: *The Ottoman Turks*; op cit; p. 676.

Four years later, by 1400 the Turks were masters of almost the whole of Anatolia, and were involved in wars with Europe.⁴¹⁹ Suddenly, from behind the Ottomans appeared Timur the Lame (Timur Lang).⁴²⁰ At the decisive battle of Angora, on 28 July 1402, Bayazid was betrayed by local contingents, who deserted en masse to Timur's side during the battle.⁴²¹ At this battle, Timur had invited the Castilian embassies that included Enrique Payo de Soto and Hernan Sanchez de Palazuelos, at their head, to watch the fierce fighting.⁴²² The embassy returned to Castile with the news of the immense victory by Timur, which avenged previous Ottoman victories against the Christians.⁴²³ Bayazid was taken prisoner, put in a cage; his capital Brusa taken and burnt down.⁴²⁴

Timur's irruption had weakened the Ottomans considerably, the Ottoman realm, in fact, being brought to the verge of extinction. However, far from being finished by the blow it had received in 1402, Turkey rose stronger and more vigorous, and, 'like a giant refreshed prepared for new and bolder feats of conquest.'⁴²⁵ In June 1444 the Battle of Varna took place. At the battle, the Turks displayed the treaty which the Christians had violated upon a lance.⁴²⁶ The Christians had, indeed, first signed a peace treaty with the Ottomans, then they took advantage of the Sultan's (Murad II) abdication in favour of his young son to attack the Turks in the belief that the Ottoman realm was now weak.⁴²⁷ Instead, the battle ended with a crushing Turkish victory, the Christian army being totally destroyed.⁴²⁸

In 1453 the famed conquest of Constantinople took place, which submitted to three successive Ottoman assaults in two days (May 28-9).

After Constantinople, the Black Sea became Ottoman lake. In the heart of Anatolia, the emirate of Kraman was again absorbed into the empire.⁴²⁹ Between 1459 and 1467, Serbia and Bosnia submitted to

⁴¹⁹ Paul Wittek: *The Ottoman Turks*; op cit; pp. 114 -5.

⁴²⁰ J.W. Draper: *A History*; op cit; Vol II; p.106.

⁴²¹ Paul Wittek: *The Ottoman Turks*; op cit; p.115.

⁴²² R.De Zayas: *Les Morisques*; op cit; p. 136.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ E. Pears: *The Ottoman Turks*; op cit; p.682.

⁴²⁵ Lane Poole: *Turkey*; p. 75.

⁴²⁶ E. Pears: *The Ottoman Turks*; op cit; p. 691.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ A.S. Atiya: *Crusade*; op cit; p. 150.

⁴²⁹ P.M. Holt: *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent: 1522-1922*; (Cornell Paperbacks; Ithaca; New York; 1966); p.27.

Ottoman rule. Vlad of Valachia and Etinne of Moldavia were soon defeated. In 1475, Turkish warships took Caffa, the main Genoese outpost. Under Bayazid II (1481-1512), between 1499 and 1502, the Turks took from the Latins, the Morea and the Aegean Islands.⁴³⁰

The Turks diverted armies elsewhere to fight the Spaniards and Portuguese threatening Muslim North Africa. The treaty of Alcacovas of 4 September 1479 between Spain and Portugal delimited their respective zones of influence. Following the taking of Grenada in 1492, Spain led the offensive against North Africa, in pursuit of the Spanish-Papal policy of prolonged attack on Islam.⁴³¹ Algeria was on the way to being overwhelmed by Spanish conquest when the Sheikhs of Algeria called for the Ottoman Turks to intervene.⁴³² Arooj, the eldest of the Barbarossa Brothers, recaptured Algiers from the Spaniards.⁴³³ Later in the same year, a Spanish fleet with ten thousand men was sent against Algiers under the command of Diego de Vera. Arooj was informed, and he waited for it to land before destroying the whole Spanish army on the shores of the city.⁴³⁴ In 1517, Khair Al-Din, the other Barbarossa Brother, defeated a new Spanish expedition under Ugo de Moncada in front of Algiers.⁴³⁵ The danger of a Christian conquest of North Africa was, thus, averted by the arrival of the so called Barbarossa Brothers.⁴³⁶ Bejaia was retaken from the Spaniards in 1555 by Salah Reis, Beylerbey of Algiers; whilst Tripoli was recovered in 1551 by Sinan Pasha and Turgut. The Spaniards renewed attempts to retake these places were repulsed.

Having just saved North Africa from Christian expansion, the Turks pursued their campaigns elsewhere. Under Suleiman I, the Magnificent (1520-66), they managed to take Rhodes in 1522. On August 29, 1526 the Battle of Mohacs was fought, in which the Franco-Hungarian armies were literally wiped out by a supposedly broken Turkish front; the Hungarian elite as well as the French all perishing, and the Hungarian kingdom perished too.⁴³⁷ Three years later, in 1529, Suleiman put Vienna under siege. At that time, from the Adriatic to the

⁴³⁰ A.S. Atiya: *Crusades*; op cit; p. 154.

⁴³¹ F. Fernandez Armesto: *Before Columbus*; (Mc Millan; London; 1987); p.148.

⁴³² G. Fisher: *The Barbary Legend*; (Oxford; 1957); p. 36.

⁴³³ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p. 262.

⁴³⁴ R. De Zayas: *Les Morisques*; op cit; p. 157.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid*; p. 159.

⁴³⁶ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p.262.

⁴³⁷ D. Vaughan: *Europe*; op cit; p. 114.

Ganges, to the Gulf of Bengal, from the Steppes of Russia or Turkmenistan to the sands of Arabia and Sahara, Driault holds, the Ottomans had made of their diverse tribes an empire larger than that of the Arabs before them, greater than that of Alexander.⁴³⁸

However, by the late 17th century, a number of factors came together against the Ottomans, and caused their gradual decline. One such factor was the weaker rulers who followed Suleiman the magnificent, who at once stimulated discontent among the subject people, and cupidity and ambition among the Western powers.⁴³⁹ Also, in a concerted push, the Spaniards again launched an assault on Turkish North Africa in 1603 to coincide with Safavids' renewal of hostilities in the east.⁴⁴⁰ The wars against the Safavids stretched the Ottomans,⁴⁴¹ the Safavids, after a seven year break, having resumed their attacks in the 1620s.⁴⁴²

The Western alliances against the Turks grew stronger, too. On the Western front, the Turks fought Hungarians, Austrians, Spaniards, Venetians, Poles, Russians, armies of the Pope, and also the French and the English.⁴⁴³ In the East, the Ottomans fought the Safavids and Armenians on land, and the Portuguese in the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea.⁴⁴⁴ The Venetian navy remained a constant threat throughout the 1640s, especially in the Dardanelles, culminating in 1656 in the destruction of the Ottoman navy, thus blocking the Mediterranean route to the Muslims.⁴⁴⁵ The Ottomans registered some victories in Wallachia, Crete, Novigrad during the 1660s,⁴⁴⁶ but, throughout the 1670s, until they lifted their second siege of Vienna, in 1683, they had to face alliances of Poles, Austrians, Russians, Ukrainians, and also the French.⁴⁴⁷ In 1683, the Turks were forced to lift their second siege of Vienna pressed by an alliance of Austrians, Poles and Germans. The banner seized from the Grand Vizier was sent to Pope Innocent XI and proudly displayed on top

⁴³⁸ E. Driault: *La Question d'Orient*; (Librairie Felix Alcan; Paris; 1921); p.26.

⁴³⁹ D. Vaughan: *Europe and the Turk*; op cit; 212.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² H. Inalcik: An Overview of Ottoman History; in *The Great Ottoman, Turkish Civilisation*; ed by H. Inalcik; Ankara; 2000; pp. 3-104; at p. 96.

⁴⁴³ See for details E. Driault: *La Question d'Orient*; op cit.

⁴⁴⁴ P. Coles: *The Ottoman Impact on Europe*; (Thames and Hudson; 1974); p. 78.

⁴⁴⁵ See for details E. Driault: *La Question*; op cit; and for brief accounts H. Inalcik; An Overview; p. 97.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid; p. 98

of the main portal of St Peter's.⁴⁴⁸ It was the best symbol of Turkish reversal of fortunes.

1699, the last year of the 17th century was the last year of an era, too. Weakened by incessant wars, the Ottomans signed the treaty of Karlowitz, signalling the end of Ottoman might. By this treaty, Austria kept Transylvania and Hungary north of the Marosch and west of the Theiss, with most of Slavonia; Poland recovered Podolia and Kaminiec; Venice retained Dalmatia and the Morea or Peloponnesus.⁴⁴⁹

The 18th century witnessed further slides in Ottoman fortunes. The wars with Russia were a dominant aspect of Ottoman history during the century, one conflict ending, one peace treaty signed, before another war erupted, and generally, turning to the Russian advantage, and large territorial gains at the Ottoman expense. Under Catherine the Great (ruled 1762-1796) Russia began her attempts to break through to the Mediterranean, and in pursuit of this objective, fought no less than ten wars against the Ottomans, from Catherine's reign until the First World War.⁴⁵⁰ In 1774 after five years of war, the Turks were defeated, and signed the treaty of Kainardji.⁴⁵¹ The treaty conformed to the conditions Russia had put down. She took Azov, Kinburn, Ienikale ... and proclaimed the independence of Crimea. Russia made herself the protector of the Danubian principalities; and paved the way for her future supremacy of the Black Sea by obtaining free right to navigate it. In January 1792 the Treaty of Jassy was signed, which amongst others gave Russia the role of protector of Christians living under Turkish sovereignty. Subsequent concessions the Ottomans were to make to the Balkan Christians and to the Armenians were rejected, and demands for independence were made at the instigation of Russia.⁴⁵²

The 19th century witnessed a thorough disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, its various subject populations breaking away one after the other, backed militarily mainly by France, Britain, and Russia. The Serbs rebelled in 1806-7, a pig farmers' uprising, the leader also a pig farmer: Georges Petrovich (Georges the Black).⁴⁵³ The Serb rebellion

⁴⁴⁸ Delumeau, p. 269; in A Gunny: *Images*; op cit; p. 2.

⁴⁴⁹ S. Lane Poole: *Turkey*; op cit; p. 241.

⁴⁵⁰ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p.251

⁴⁵¹ Details in E. Driault: *La Question*; op cit; at pp. 54-5; and A. Sorel: *The Eastern Question*; (Howard Fertig; New York; 1969); pp. 247-8.

⁴⁵² J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p. 251.

⁴⁵³ E. Driault: *La Question*; op cit; p.90.

had a patron: Russia, and the idea of Greater Serbia was now nurtured.⁴⁵⁴ In February 1821, the Greeks of Morea went into rebellion, and in 1822 Greek independence was declared.⁴⁵⁵ Greece had rebelled with Franco-British assistance (with arms, finance and political support), and propaganda, too.⁴⁵⁶ In 1827, the London treaty between France, Britain and Russia agreed to send a fleet to the Mediterranean to fight the Turks; and in the same year, the Turkish navy was burnt at Navarino.⁴⁵⁷ Within a few years, the Ottomans found themselves at war with Russia, facing a widespread rebellion in Montenegro (also with Russian support). Ali, the Pacha of Janina (who was supported by France), also rebelled, and in the process massacred Turks and their supporters.⁴⁵⁸ And so did Muhammad Ali of Egypt, whose army reached the southern parts of Turkey at a time when the Russian fleet was in the Bosphorous.⁴⁵⁹ France took advantage of all this to wrest Algeria from the Ottomans in 1830.

The big powers were all involved in the dismembering of Turkey, backing Greek rebellion in Crete, in 1866, Christian uprising in Bosnia in 1875, and rebellions by the Serbs and Montenegrins the same year. Tsar Alexander visited Europe to form an alliance against the Ottomans, with the partition of the Ottoman Empire on the agenda.⁴⁶⁰ To achieve such an aim, and rouse opinion, Turkish 'barbaric deeds' inflicted on local Christians became the focal point of attention, Turkish 'barbarism' leading to calls for crusades against the Turks.⁴⁶¹ In 1876 after the Turks suppressed a Bulgarian insurrection, and the news of the 'atrocities' committed against fellow Christians reached the West, the British general, Gordon, who was himself crusading in the Sudan, in a letter dated January 1880, declared:

'I will go to Rome and see the Pope and obtain a brief to mount a crusade and preach against these people (the Turks).'⁴⁶²

The crusade to end Turkish 'barbarism' was, however, only cover for the real aim: the partition of Turkey now that the country was weak. Already, in 1853, Czar Nicholas I, in conversation with the British

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ H. Inalcik: *Chronology of the Ottoman Empire*; op cit; p.101.

⁴⁵⁶ Details in E. Driault: *La Question*; op cit; and A. Sorel: *The Eastern*; op cit.

⁴⁵⁷ H. Inalcik: *Chronology of the Ottoman Empire*; op cit; p.101.

⁴⁵⁸ See E. Driault: *La Question*, 90 fwd.

⁴⁵⁹ H. Inalcik: *Chronology of the Ottoman Empire*; p.101.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid; p.103.

⁴⁶¹ C. Grossir: *L'Islam des Romantiques*; (Maisonnette; Larose; Paris, 1984); p. 103.

⁴⁶² In E. Siberry: *The New Crusaders*; (Ashgate: Aldershot; 2000); p.86.

naval commander Sir Hamilton Seymour, could, in fact, confidently speak of the 'Sick man, seriously ill' that Europe had 'on its hands,' namely the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁶³ In 1878, Ottoman territory was generously partitioned at the Berlin Congress, which proclaimed independence for Serbia, Montenegro and Romania from Turkey. The autonomy of Bulgaria was proclaimed; Russia took her territorial spoils: Batum, Kars, and Ardahan;⁴⁶⁴ France took her share, wresting Tunisia from the Ottomans in 1881. Britain had free hand in Egypt.

As the Ottoman realm shrank rapidly, Turkey's very survival was now in question. Gladstone, the British Prime Minister, on 22 July 1880 stated in front of parliament:

'Even if very much wishing to avoid the complications that will arise from the dismantlement of the Turkish Empire, the respect of its duty by the Turkish government towards its subjects is no longer a secondary matter for us. It is the priority. If Turkey does not fulfil such duties, its integrity and its independence will be the matters for it alone to resolve.'⁴⁶⁵

Sultan Abd el-Hamid (1876-1908) sought to halt the slide. Facing him was a bleak reality, though: Armenian rebellion and terror were tearing Istanbul throughout the decades of the 1880s-1890s, the Armenians receiving full support from the British, who were also backing the Bulgarians in their war with Turkey in 1885, whilst the British navy exerted more pressure in the Dardanelles.⁴⁶⁶ Russia was nurturing projects for the occupation of Istanbul (1895-6), whilst the Greeks were rising in Crete (1896), and the French attacked Mytilenes (1901).⁴⁶⁷ The 'Revolution of the Young Turks' (1908-9) could not stop the slide, especially in the wake of the 1912 Great Balkan War against the Turks. In great secret, Bulgars, Greeks, Montenegrins and Serbs, armed by France, and backed by Russia, embarked on their attempt to wrest from Turkey its last 'Christian' provinces, and to share the empire. Italy joined in for the spoils, too.⁴⁶⁸ The empire was crumbling, and yet German officers in Constantinople bore witness to the immense Turkish courage

⁴⁶³ M. Rodinson: *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*; tr: R. Veinus; (I.B. Tauris and Co Ltd; London; 1988); p.59.

⁴⁶⁴ H. Inalcik: *Chronology of the Ottoman Empire*; op cit; p.103.

⁴⁶⁵ Engelhardt: *La Turquie et le Tanzimat*; II; p. 219.225. In E. Driault: *La Question*; op cit; p. 351.

⁴⁶⁶ H. Inalcik: *Chronology of the Ottoman Empire*; op cit; p.104.

⁴⁶⁷ E. Driault: *La Question*; op cit; for detail on all these events. H. Inalcik: *Chronology*; p. 104.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

in fighting for their land.⁴⁶⁹ As tensions began to rise within Europe itself, on the eve of the First World War, in 1913, treaties of London, Bucharest and Constantinople were signed, bringing peace, but also vast territorial losses for the Turks, in the Balkans primarily.

In the wake of the First World War, in November 1914, the Sultan of Turkey, in his capacity of Caliph, declared a jihad or holy war, calling upon all the Muslims in the world to fight against France, Britain and Russia. To Britain in India and Egypt, and to France in North Africa, a universal rising of Muslims would have been embarrassing to the extreme.⁴⁷⁰ Just then, the Turkish-German alliance was rocked by a vast Russian offensive in the Caucasus and Armenia, and the Sharif of Makkah rose against the Turks. 'The Arabs refused obedience to the usurper from Constantinople,' the Frenchman Driault said triumphantly.⁴⁷¹

Just a year after the end of the First World War, the French and British, who had come to free the Arabs from the Turkish 'despot,' instead divided Arab lands between themselves. This was justified on the grounds that the Arabs needed the enlightened hand of the French and British, as expressed by Driault:

'Some will say that the Arab civilisation seeks to be reborn after six centuries of Turkish darkness. From Egypt to Syria and Mesopotamia and the Arab states try to come back to life, and bear with difficulty the European tutorship, which however is indispensable for their political and economic re-organisation.'⁴⁷²

Thus, by 1918, nearly ten centuries after the first crusade, the Holy Land was in the hands of the Christians again, and Ottoman power was finished. Driault brings down the curtain:

'It is not too early to see the end of Turkish Islam. The Great War has dealt a mortal blow to the sick man... and the event of 1453 is now entirely paid for.... The Sultan keeps Constantinople because of an irony of faith, and because there is difficulty in knowing to whom it should be granted... The sultan will not keep the Dardanelles, nor the guardianship of the Bosphorus, of which he has been a 'bad door-keeper'.⁴⁷³

⁴⁶⁹ In E. Driault: *La Question*; op cit; pp 395 fwd.

⁴⁷⁰ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p.273.

⁴⁷¹ E. Driault: *La Question*; op cit; p. 431.

⁴⁷² Ibid; p. 440.

⁴⁷³ Ibid; pp. 440-1.

Turkey, eventually survived under a new status, no longer the upholder of the Caliphate, but a strongly secularised nation. As for the Arabs, when at last they realised Western duplicity, they rose against it, and were bombed and gassed in their tens of thousands into submission.⁴⁷⁴

Throughout these centuries of wars between the Ottomans and Christian nations, one theme kept recurring and dominating events and literature: Turkish barbarism under its many forms, mainly its cruelties towards Christians.

2. The Turk as ‘the Cruel Persecutor and Oppressor of Christians’

The stereotyped Turk, savage and bloodthirsty, swooping upon innocent Christians, and massacring them indiscriminately, became firmly established in the tradition of the West.⁴⁷⁵ In England, for instance, as Baumer notes, the attitude of publicists, the clergy, and statesmen toward the Turk in the 16th and 17th centuries differed very little from literary and popular attitudes.⁴⁷⁶ This identification of the Turk with the beast of the apocalypse lasted for centuries as the following shows.⁴⁷⁷

a. The 15th-17th Century Period:

Ottoman successes in the 15th century, and most especially following their capture of Constantinople, caused an outburst of emotions

⁴⁷⁴ T.E. Lawrence; on BBC2: Saturday 6 and 13 December 2003; 8.10 p.m.

⁴⁷⁵ Note 47: Cf. M. Gilmore: *The World of Humanism; 1453-1517*; (New York, 1952); pp 20-1; who believes that such a view of the Turk was the product of the literature of the 16th century.

⁴⁷⁶ F.L. Baumer: England, the Turk and the Common Corps of Christendom; in J.S. Geary: Arredondo's Castillo inexpugnable de la fee; op cit; p 292.

⁴⁷⁷ By far, the best outline of Western depictions of the Turks is by A. Cirakman: *From the Terror of the World to the 'Sick Man of Europe,'* (Peter Lang Publishing; New York; 2002).

throughout the Christian world. Writing to obtain much needed assistance, the grand master of Rhodes, Jean de Lastic, vividly portrayed his 'perilous position and the ultimate threat to Christian civilisation.' 'The Grand Turk,' he wrote,

'...Was a wild beast who practised every manner of cruelty and impiety upon Christians; and daily his savagery waxed greater. His thirst for human blood was insatiable and so uncontrollable that he had personally joined in the carnage. He allowed human bodies, naked and decapitated, to be left in the streets to be eaten by dogs.'⁴⁷⁸

Pope Nicholas V on September 30, 1453, following the Turkish taking of Constantinople, addressed a crusade bull to all Christendom. In it he denounced Mohammed II (the conqueror of Constantinople) as:

'The cruellest persecutor of the Church of Christ, the son of satan, the son of perdition, the son of death who thirsted for the blood of Christians. He pronounced the sultan to be the great red dragon with seven heads crowned by seven diadems and with ten horns described by St John.'⁴⁷⁹

Pius II (Pope 1458-1464) represented the Turks as the natural enemies of the Christian faith. 'As a nation,' he wrote, 'the Turks are the foes of the Trinity.'⁴⁸⁰ In his first oration before the congress of Mantua he proclaimed his intention of protecting the faith, which the Turks were doing everything in their power to destroy.⁴⁸¹

Chroniclers repeated the tales of Turkish atrocities with meticulous pains, and did not tire in describing them, and in attributing every conceivable crime to the enemies of the faith.⁴⁸² An English chronicler exclaims:

'If I should write, the detestable murder of men, the abominable and cruel slaughter of children, the shameful ravishment of women and virgins, which were perpetrated and done by the unmerciful pagan and cruel Turks, I assure you that your ears would abhor the hearing, and your eyes would not abide the reading, and therefore, I pass them over.'⁴⁸³

⁴⁷⁸ R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow*; op cit; pp.7-8:

⁴⁷⁹ L. Pastor: *History of the Popes*; ed and tr. F. Antrobus.; 276. in R. Schwoebel: *The shadow*; op cit. P 31.

⁴⁸⁰ *The Commentaries of Pius II*; tr. and ed. L.C. Gabel and F.A. Gragg; Smith College Studies in History. (Northampton Mass., 1936-1957). Commentaries; II; 116.

⁴⁸¹ Pius II: *Commentaries*; III, 141.

⁴⁸² R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow*; op cit; pp 12-3.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid*; p. 13.

The details of the story, Schwoebel notes, differ from one chronicler to another but in general they cover the same ground emphasising the brutality of the Turks.⁴⁸⁴

Jacques de Clerk described the scene when the Turks found many women inside the Church of Holy Wisdom:

‘They (the Turks) enjoyed their carnal proximity; using force in contempt of God our Creator.’⁴⁸⁵

Mathieu D’Escouchy said:

‘Mehmed II slept with the daughter of the emperor, who was the most beautiful damsel in all the empire. Throughout the night the Grand Turk tried to persuade her to renounce Christianity in favour of Islam, but with no success. The following morning he took her to the Church of Holy Wisdom, and exhibited in front her beheaded Christians. Again the sultan implored her to accept his religion;’

But D’Escouchy proudly added:

‘She preferred death to apostasy. Dismayed, Mehmed II stripped her naked, and had her beheaded on the statue of the Virgin.’⁴⁸⁶

European ‘Humanists,’ likewise, dwelt on Turkish atrocities, the slaughter of all people aged over six, mass rape, and Westerners, at any rate, accepted these rumours and humanists did not miss the opportunity to sell lurid tales of rapes on the high altar of Hagia Sophia in their accounts and letters.⁴⁸⁷ Although such accounts hardly express reality, what matters was that humanists, like most Westerners, believed even the most sensational reports of violence and savagery that came their way, Bisaba remarks.⁴⁸⁸

Every Turkish success was met with similar horrified accounts. Cardinal Bessarion, thus, held:

‘The Turks were no better than savages. Despoilers of all that was worthwhile, inhuman barbarians, fiercest of wild beasts, they were guilty of every vile and debased deed. Their behaviour at Negropont recalled the horror of the rape of Constantinople. Their heinous treatment of non-combatants, of

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ Jacques de Clerk: *Memoires*; ed J.A. Buchon in *Chroniques d’Enguerrand de Monstrelet*; Vol Xiii. (Paris, 1826); p. 147.

⁴⁸⁶ Mathieu D’Escouchy: *Chronique*; ed G. Du Fresne de Beaucourt; 3 Vols; (Paris 1863-4); Vol II; 35; 36.

⁴⁸⁷ See, for instance, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini’s *letter to Leonardo benvoglianti*; ed. Pertusi; *La Caduta*; vol 2; pp. 62-4.

⁴⁸⁸ N. Bisaba: ‘New Barbarian’ or worthy adversary? Humanist Constructs of the Ottoman Turks in fifteenth century Italy; in *Western Perceptions* (Blanks-Frassetto ed); op cit; pp. 185-205; p.192.

old men, women and children and the corpses of the deceased was beyond belief. [Bessarion recounted] how at Negropont Mohammed II's soldiers stuffed the bodies of Christians into vases and hurled them by catapults against the camp of the defenders.⁴⁸⁹

Schwoebel notes how imagination encouraged writers to invent specific details... fear itself magnified in the eyes of the Latins the inhuman qualities of the Turks which gripped Europe since the fall of Constantinople.⁴⁹⁰ The Turkish peril, Schwoebel also holds, was viewed as the last phase in the centuries-old assault of Islam upon Christendom.⁴⁹¹ And for their evaluation and understanding of the problem, he explains, Europeans of the time drew heavily upon the medieval corpus dealing with Islam and the Levant. They just clung tenaciously to established categories and adapted a large body of new information to the forms of thought and expression developed in the anti Muslim crusading literature of the Middle Ages.⁴⁹² For Martin Luther, the head of the reformed Church, Ottoman expansion in the Balkans bore the features of the apocalyptic Antichrist, and spread terror, barbarity and a new religion with fire and sword.⁴⁹³ Luther's writings against the Turk included his great hymn '*Ein feste burg ist unser Gott*' (*A Safe Stronghold our God is Still*) said by Heine to be the equivalent of the Marseillaise of the reformation.

'Its robust and militant faith might well have made it the war song of Christendom against the 'ancient evil foe,' whose like was not on earth and who with force and cunning combined was making his terrible preparations for a mighty blow.'⁴⁹⁴

In the year (1529) Luther restored to the reformed service the Litany that had been before then abandoned, and in *Vom kriege* advised that it should be sung or read by the young people as a form of prayer against the Turk.⁴⁹⁵

The champions of Catholicism, the Spaniards, saw things more globally; from their viewpoint, sixteenth century military and naval

⁴⁸⁹ The text here is in J. B. Migne: *patrologia series graeca*; CLXI; cols 665-7.

⁴⁹⁰ R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow*; op cit; p. 13:

⁴⁹¹ Ibid; preface: ix-x.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

⁴⁹³ In Petra Kappert: From romanticisation to colonial dominance; in *The Next Threat*; op cit; pp 32-56; at p.33:

⁴⁹⁴ In D. Vaughan: *Europe*; op cit; p. 138.

⁴⁹⁵ Werke. Bd. 30/2; p. 118. In D. Vaughan: *Europe*; op cit; p. 138.

confrontations with the Ottomans were 'the logical continuation of a struggle long ago undertaken and never since abandoned.'⁴⁹⁶

The association of monstrous Turkish cruelties inflicted upon the Christians and the need to wage war on the Turks could be found well expressed in Arredondo's *Castillo inexpugnable defensorio de la fee etc*, written for Charles V (Emperor 1500-1558), whose English title goes as follows:

'Inexpugnable castle, defender of the faith and admirable discourse to conquer all enemies, both spiritual and corporal. And true account of marvellous things, both ancient and modern. And exhortation to pursue the Turk, and to conquer him, and to annihilate the sect of Muhammad, and every heresy, and to win back the Holy Land with Great and Joyous Triumph.'⁴⁹⁷

As Geary notes:

'Whereas Arredondo's efforts to malign Islam and the Turks were based to a significant degree on theological arguments, legendary underpinnings, and the use of opprobrious language, it was primarily by means of portraying the Ottomans as violent and avaricious people that the author's propagandistic goals were achieved. This type of portrayal was commonplace during the period in question, for as Schwoebel has shown, "the inhumanity of the Turks was emphasized above all else, and the stereotyped Turk - savage and bloodthirsty, swooping down upon innocent Christians, and massacring them indiscriminately - was firmly established in the traditions of the West.'⁴⁹⁸

To this end several chapters of the *Castillo* recounted the events leading to the Christian defeat at the citadel of Rhodes, which was abandoned by the Knights of St. John after a long and dreadful siege. This lengthy interlude served to exemplify the aggressive character of the enemy. Suleyman appears as a deceitful and false leader, having betrayed an oath sworn to the Grand Master of Rhodes. According to the chronicler:

"Like a perverse and cruel tyrant, an enemy of truth, on Christmas Day, in order to cause Christians grief, he (Suleyman) tore down the gate to the city, and with his banners and armed men, and with a great uproar, he entered the city

⁴⁹⁶ P. Coles: *The Ottoman Impact on Europe*, (Thames and Hudson, London; 1968); p.126.

⁴⁹⁷ in J.S. Geary: Arredondo's *Castillo*; op cit; pp. 293-4.

⁴⁹⁸ R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow*; op cit; p. 13.

and profaned and defiled the Church of St. John, and he destroyed the holy statues and the altarpiece, and he worshiped Muhammad in this same temple, and he had the same done in all the temples and churches, and he didn't uphold a thing that he had promised, like infernal Lucifer.⁴⁹⁹

The text thus sought to establish a trifold relationship, based on deception, between the Prophet Muhammad, his successor, Suleyman, and their mutual agent, the Devil. This notion of the diabolical sect, strategically reinforced throughout the *Castillo*, could hardly have elicited an ambivalent response from a Christian reader living with the threat of invasion from the East. Arredondo's message was clear enough: the Devil and his allies must be annihilated.⁵⁰⁰

'As an imperial propagandist Arredondo coupled his knowledge of history and contemporary European affairs with his rhetorical skill and with undergirding from both literary and theological traditions in order to present a picture of Islam and the Turks intended to make a marked impression on his readers, many of whom, he must have assumed, would consist of Christian princes and noblemen who could perhaps be persuaded to wage the holy war that would put the survival of the Christian Commonwealth on more secure ground. Toward the end of the *Castillo* he issued one last plea on behalf of the Church, reminding members of the nobility of their responsibility to support the Emperor:

'Go, go and defend the holy law of your Lord and God Who gave you the estates, dominions, and incomes that you possess. Now we will see who among you is truly a Catholic knight, how much sincerity you have in serving your God, your King and Emperor, how much you love your country, how much charity you have for your faithful brother Christians and how much hate toward the evil unbelievers. Arm yourselves, oh noble knights, with both material and spiritual weapons so that you may destroy the enemy, these dogs, the Turks.'⁵⁰¹

The 17th century continued on the same lines, identifying the Turk as a cruel persecutor of Christians. Thus, d'Avity writes:

⁴⁹⁹ Fol 46; in J. S. Geary: Arredondo's *Castillo*; op cit; p. 304.

⁵⁰⁰ J. S. Geary: Arredondo's *Castillo*; op cit; p. 304.

⁵⁰¹ Fol 61; in J. S. Geary: Arredondo's *Castillo*; op cit; p. 305.

‘There is no nation in the world so arrogant. And this insolence growes in them from the many victories that these barbarians have obtained in all parts, and by reason of the wonderful largeness and extent of their prince’s dominions.’ ‘They are exceedingly given to whoredom and all kind of un-cleanness, yea euen to sodomy itself, which they use publicly... They are treacherous and disloyal as may be, and make no scruple of breaking their promises so as this infidel has been the ruin of many Christians, which trusting to their words, have often yielded themselves into their hands, who afterwards were miserably massacred or led into captivity.’⁵⁰²

For Abercomby and other contemporaries, the Turks have an ambition to destroy Christianity and they are now ‘the powerfulllest nation in Europe.’⁵⁰³ Knolles, equally, states that the history of the Turks is a record of the ruin of the greater part of the Christian commonwealth.⁵⁰⁴

For Marsh, it is lawful to make war on the Turks because they are:

‘So ignorant and barbarous that they are incapable of government, their constitutions are so unnatural as that of slaves governing freeman: that of murder in case of expending: that of commonese of women: that of prohibiting learning etc, that mankind by a league of nature, and the tacit consideration of humanity, should rise against them as the reproaches of humane monsters of mankind, as the very shame of nature.’⁵⁰⁵

Likewise, for the Frenchman La Noue, an offensive should be undertaken by a united force of all Christendom, a war that must be undertaken to rescue the souls infected by Islam, and to set the bodies free ‘from the most horrible bondage that ever was.’⁵⁰⁶

Throughout the period, disseminating the image of the bloodthirsty Turkish beast was the work of scholar-publishers-pioneers of the first half-century of printing. ‘Combining a sharp eye for business, a passion for scholarship, and some spirited concern for the moral issues of the day,’ Schwoebel notes, ‘they quickly wielded their presses in defence of

⁵⁰² P. D’Avity: *The Estates, Empires and Principalities of the World*; Tr by E. Grimestone; (London; 1615); p. 948.

⁵⁰³ D. Abercomby: *The Present State of the German and Turkish Empires*; (London; 1660); p. 15.

⁵⁰⁴ R. Knolles: *The General Historie of the Turks....*; (London; 1687-1700) in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 85.

⁵⁰⁵ H. Marsh: *A New Survey of the Turkish Empire*; (London; 1664); pp. 65-6.

⁵⁰⁶ F. La Noue: *The Politicke and Militarie discourse of the Lord de la Noue*; tr. E. A. London; p. 247.

the faith. Publishing news and reports of the Ottoman advance, the tales of travellers, histories, and a wide variety of publicistic pieces, the printers kept the Turkish peril before the eyes of an ever expanding reading public.⁵⁰⁷ Their printed texts, often accompanied by pictorial illustrations, further stimulated the sense of crisis. The large volume of works made available for the new reading public of the Renaissance presented the eastern peril in terms and proportions inconceivable in the Middle Ages.

b. 18th-19th Century Depictions:

As the Ottomans began to decline, the Western depictions associated a new element to the old rhetoric: the means and methods necessary for the destruction of the now weakening monster. The Frenchman Lucinge, as here outlined by Cirakman, advises:

‘(First) he recommends to investigate the means that the Ottomans have practiced for their advancement and greatness. The second issue is “with what cunning and deceit they maintain what they have gotten” and the third one asks, “How we may be able to assail them and turn the chance of their victories and powers?” According to him, since the basic cause of Turkish greatness is the idleness of Christians, the war against the Turks must be offensive. However, the “empire of the Turk cannot receive any damage or alteration by outward causes, it is necessary that inward causes, either separate or mixed, effect it.” So that it would be easier to defeat it by an open force. The inward and mixed causes are defined as the defects that might enable the enemy to introduce tumults into the empire. These include the hatred, contempt and disobedience of the emperor’s officers and servants; the conflicts that may arise about the succession to the throne; disloyalty of the Janissaries might start to influence the government, or the possible rebellion and revolt of the people against their governors..... Lucinge offers to ruin the empire by conspiring against it abroad and at home... His (The Grand

⁵⁰⁷ R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow*; op cit;p. 166:

Turk) people must be provoked to rebellion, his great men and chief officers are to be gained'⁵⁰⁸

According to Knolles, with all their power and might, the Turks are not invincible. They have weaknesses. One of them is that it is not easy to keep obedience of so many distinct nations some of which he assumes are discontented.⁵⁰⁹

One of these nations was Greece, and Eton notes how the solution to the miserable condition of the Greeks is very simple and profitable for Europe:

'Greece can no longer submit to the Turkish yoke; she pants for emancipation and already aspires to be ranked among the independent states of Europe. The rise or rather the renovation of her power will form an important era for European politics.'⁵¹⁰

He also says:

'The expulsion of the Turks from Europe and the reestablishment of the Greek Empire, is more to the advantage of Britain than even of Russia itself; that so far from being a usurpation, it is an act of justice; and that according to the laws of nations, the Turks have not, by length of possession, acquired a right to domain of the countries they conquered.'⁵¹¹

Eton also pioneers in the Western strategic polemic, by both praising and commiserating with the fate of the people living within the Turkish realm, including the Arabs. He claims that the Arabs consider the Turks as enemies, and unlike the Turks they neither kill nor make slaves out of their prisoners.⁵¹² He compares the Arab conquest of Spain with Turkish conquests and argues that the Arabs have much better qualities such as lively manners and ardent minds, which made them adapt their fundamentally 'barbarian and gloomy religion to those of their neighbours.'⁵¹³ By way of contrast, the Turks were not only given to superstition and ignorance but also intensified the influence of their religion by excessive cruelty and barbarism.⁵¹⁴

Volnay goes further seeing the Arabs as the contemporaries of ancient glorious civilizations that deserve a better rule than a Turkish yoke.⁵¹⁵

⁵⁰⁸ R. de Lucinge: *The Beginning, Continuance and Decay of Estates*; Tr. J. Finet; (London; 1606); in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; pp. 89-90.

⁵⁰⁹ R. Knolles: *The General Historie of the Turks*....; (London; 1687-1700); p. 990.

⁵¹⁰ W. Eton: *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*; (London; 1798); p. 334.

⁵¹¹ Ibid; p. viii.

⁵¹² Ibid; p. 196.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Volnay: *Travels Through Syria and Egypt*; (Dublin; 1788).

The Egyptians, for instance, have lost their courage with their freedom under

‘... the severe oppression of the Turks. However, in their minds, when swayed by certain prejudice, are capable of great energy, which only wants proper direction, to become a formidable courage.’⁵¹⁶

Some polemicists went further, asserting that Turkey in the hands of the Turks was a disaster for humanity, and the only solution was the colonisation of Turkey itself. Hunter holds that in the hands of the Ottomans, Turkey is a wasteland and remains in an uncultivated state, however,

‘In the hands of a well-governed, civilised and enlightened people, Turkey would certainly be one of the most beautiful and productive countries in the world.’⁵¹⁷

Craven also preaches for colonisation:

‘Yes, I confess, I wish to see a colony of honest English families here; establishing manufactures such as England produces, and returning the produce of this country to ours: establishing a fair and free trade from hence, and teaching industry and honesty to the insidious but oppressed Greeks, in their islands -waking the indolent Turk from his gilded slumbers, and carrying fair liberty in her swelling sails.’⁵¹⁸

As Glubb notes, European powers did not want the Ottoman Empire to be reformed but to be destroyed.⁵¹⁹ Dismembering Turkey was deemed a necessity amidst learned Western opinion. Voltaire, in the 18th century, acted as a leading, tireless voice, just as others (De la Croix; Byron, Chateaubriand, etc. were to do in the following century), to urge such dismemberment. Following the Russian victory over the Turks in September 1769, courtesy of French intrigues,⁵²⁰ Voltaire called the sovereigns of Europe to arms to march against the Turks for the glory of their crowns and the profit of their states.⁵²¹ To Catherine II of Russia (1726-1796) he suggested the partition of Turkey:

‘Your majesty should be beating the Turks towards Yassi or elsewhere, were I Emperor of the Romans, Bosnia and Servia

⁵¹⁶ Ibid; p. 127.

⁵¹⁷ W. Hunter: *Travels in the Year 1792*; (London; 1796); p. 394.

⁵¹⁸ E. Craven: *A Journey through the Crimea....*; (Dublin 1789); p. 249.

⁵¹⁹ John Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p. 251.

⁵²⁰ Beer; vol i., p.256; in A. Sorel: *The Eastern*; op cit; p. 55.

⁵²¹ Voltaire in A. Sorel: *The Eastern*; op cit; p. 55.

would soon see me, and afterwards I would come and beg a dinner of you at Sophia, or at Phillipopolis in Romania; after which we would partition in friendly fashion.⁵²²

The only problem for Voltaire was that Frederick the Great, the Prussian Emperor, was totally opposed to the idea of partitioning Turkey.⁵²³

As Turkey slumbered into decline, Voltaire's contemporary Volnay held: 'The decree is gone forth, the day approaches when this colossal power shall be dashed to pieces and fall crushed by its own weight. Yes, I swear it by the ruin of so many empires destroyed: the empire of the crescent shall suffer the fate of the states whose scheme of government it copied. A foreign people shall chase the sultans from their metropolis; the throne of Orkhan shall be overturned; the last shoot of his race shall be cut down and the hordes of Oguzians (the Turks by their pre-Ottoman designation), deprived of its head, shall be scattered.... Till there shall arise among the Arabs, the Armenians, or the Greeks, legislators who shall form new states.'⁵²⁴

As the breakaway of diverse communities took place within the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century, a mixture of crusading fervour and anti Turkish propaganda mobilised Christendom against the Turks. Turkish 'barbarism' was immortalised by the French painter Delacroix in his 'Massacre at Chios,' where he painted the Turks slaying powerless Greek women, children and elderly. The philosopher Heine was of the opinion that the Turk bore 'a fanatical hatred' for people of different faiths whether Jews or Christians; 'for both creeds are hated by him, he looks upon them as dogs and gives them this honourable title as well.'⁵²⁵ At the outbreak of war between Russia and the Ottomans, he (Heine) celebrated the Russian Tsar Nicholas I as avenger of the Greeks: 'The knight of Europe who protects Greek widows and orphans from the Asiatic barbarians.'⁵²⁶

Whilst it was meritorious and acceptable for Christians to kill Muslims, alleged Turkish 'barbaric deeds' towards the Christians were

⁵²² Voltaire to Catherine II, May 27, 1769.

⁵²³ In A. Sorel: *The Eastern*, op cit; p. 89.

⁵²⁴ Volnay: *Les Ruines*; (Paris; 1798-9); *The Ruins*; (London 1845); p. 22; in N. Daniel: *Islam; Europe*; op cit; p.72; and A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; pp. 149-50.

⁵²⁵ In P. Kappert: *From Romanticisation*; op cit; p.39.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

used to call for tougher Western answers,⁵²⁷ i.e. the need for crusades against the Turk. Thus, when in 1876 the Turks suppressed a Bulgarian insurrection, the news of the 'atrocities' committed against fellow Christians reached the West, stirring a crusading hysteria. One of the leading campaigners was William Thomas Stead, a newspaper editor, who in an article in the *Northern Echo* in September, declared that the crusades were 'no longer an enigma' to him and in January 1877, he compared himself directly with the preacher of the First Crusade:

'I wrote dozens of letters a day, exhorting and entreating and at last I raised the North. I felt that I was called to preach a new crusade. Not against Islam, which I revered, but against the Turks who disgraced humanity. I realised the feelings of Peter the hermit. God was with me.'⁵²⁸

General Gordon (who was killed during the siege of Khartoum in the Sudan in January 1885) equally saw himself as a soldier fighting for the Christian cause and, in a letter dated January 1880, he declared:

'I will go to Rome and see the Pope and obtain a brief to mount a crusade and preach against these people (the Turks).'⁵²⁹

A contemporary Catholic pamphlet asked:

'Why is there no Crusade against the Turks? There can be no moral crusade without an armed one... Why not exhort the native Christians to rebel?'⁵³⁰

The French 'philosopher,' St Simon, for whom Europe descended from Abel, whilst Africa and Asia from Cain, felt the vocation to liberate Greece 'at the head of an army of New Crusaders.'⁵³¹

By the late 19th century, Turkey had become the Sick Man of Europe, and its partition the order of the day. The Reverent John Dalton, the chaplain of the two sons of the Prince of Wales during their world cruise between 1879 and 1882, commenting on possible options for the future Christian governance of Palestine, held:

'Now the time cannot be far distant when once more Syria will be ruled by a Christian power. 'The Franks are about to return' is the firm belief of both fellaheen and the Bedouin and such return, if it were under fair and reasonable arrangements, would be heartily welcomed by both, as deliverance from the yoke of the

⁵²⁷ C. Grossir: *L'Islam des Romantiques*; (Maisonneuve; Larose; Paris, 1984); p. 103.

⁵²⁸ In E. Siberry: *The New Crusaders*; op cit; p.84.

⁵²⁹ Ibid; p.86.

⁵³⁰ In N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; op cit; p. 345.

⁵³¹ St Simon: *Lettres*; in N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; p. 229.

Turk.⁵³²

The dying Turk, it seemed, was being kept alive by the ‘fanatical’ strength of Islam. Albert Smith, in the preface to the Second Edition of his book, *A Month in Constantinople*, says: the Turk:

‘Clings to his religion and his Koran: that will always endure, for ... (he who) drew up the Mohammedan code so flattered the passions of his followers, that their allegiance was certain as long as human nature remained unchanging.’⁵³³

Ancillon, the Prussian Minister, in a memorandum circulated among the governments of Europe, was:

‘Specifically afraid of the revival of religious intolerance among the Turks,’ among whom, despite their latter-day decadence, many qualities of strength survived dormant: ‘an idea is enough to bring out all these qualities again; religion may provide such an idea, and if this crowd of barbarians armed with sabres which they still know how to manage is electrified by the idea that Islam is in danger.’⁵³⁴

By the end of the First World War (1914-18), Turkey seemed finished. Driault gleefully expresses his feelings about this:

‘The European soil was emptying rapidly of Muslims; the roads of Asia are covered with their miserable exodus; they covered in the opposite way, pain in their soul, the traces of their ancestors, who long ago, under Bayazid, the ‘Lightning’, and under Muhammed II the conqueror, had run triumphantly, from the far East to the Adriatic. What happened to the house of Othman? Has it provoked the disgrace of the heavens? Isn’t this punishment for having listened to the infidel traitors? And if the hand of God has withdrawn from it, was it necessary to leave supreme power? Is it still capable of leading the destinies of Islam?’⁵³⁵

⁵³² In E. Siberry: *The New Crusaders*; op cit; p. 66.

⁵³³ Albert Smith: *A Month at Constantinople*; (London; 1850); p. 54; in R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; pp.101-2.

⁵³⁴ In N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; op cit; p. 225.

⁵³⁵ E. Driault: *La Question*; op cit; p. 345.

3. The Turk as ‘the Enemy of Learning and Progress’

Just as the Turk was viewed throughout the centuries as a cruel oppressor of others, he was also depicted as a barbarian, hostile to learning and science.

Late in the Middle Ages, humanists came to call the Turks barbarians, and many saw them as enemies of high culture.⁵³⁶ This was the view in the subsequent centuries. The 17th century English writer, Barclay, says:

‘The Turks, a barbarous people born to the destruction of cities, arts and learning, have prospered more by our vices than their own virtue. This public calamity of the world, by barbarous violence, multitudes of men and obedience to severe discipline had grown great.’⁵³⁷

He adds:

‘The Turks are of a rusticke and base nature, not worth of liberty which they care not to acquire. The law of Mohammad forbids them to polish their rude minds with any humanity of learning that so being ignorant they may be drawn with more ease to the madness of that law which he had prescribed.’⁵³⁸

In 1777, the French Count St Priest after arriving in Constantinople to assess the situation amongst the Turks, and prepare the eventual French carving up of the Ottoman Empire, concluded that:

‘There was no administration, no financial resources, restless populations, rebellious pachas, a disorderly army, the pride of the barbarian, the hunger of the savage, rulers made beastly by the harem culture, who learnt to rule by repression, ministers and generals mere animals picked from an ignorant mass, full of intrigues, adventurers and favourites put in power by the chance of circumstances, this is all that was Turkey.’⁵³⁹

⁵³⁶ See. R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow*; op cit; p. 164.

⁵³⁷ J. Barclay: *The Mirror of Mindes*; (London; 1633); p. 280.

⁵³⁸ Ibid; p. 290.

⁵³⁹ G. Hanotaux: (vol 5 written by H. Deherain): *Histoire de la Nation Egyptienne*, (Paris; Librairie Plon; 1931); pp. 203-4.

The 18th century traveller, Hill, denounces the fact that the Turks are prohibited from travelling to 'Such parts of the world as are enlightened by the heavenly rays of Christian doctrine.'⁵⁴⁰

The Western view is that the situation of the Turks with respect to arts and sciences is miserable; they are so backward that even the professors are themselves "Profoundly ignorant and that the greatest absurdities are mixed with all their speculations."⁵⁴¹

According to Eton, the Turks are completely ignorant in terms of astronomy, geography, mechanics and their poems are "ridiculously hyperbolic."⁵⁴²

It is not just that the Turks are portrayed as enemies of learning, they are also an inferior people. According to Hunter, Turkey inspires nothing 'but pity, contempt and disgust.'⁵⁴³ For him, the Turks are enemies to all improvements to such an extent that no persuasion can remove their prejudices or surmount their ignorance:

'At present, they are enervated, a superstitious, an ignorant and a sluggish people, the declared enemy of arts and sciences and the firm opposer of every useful institution. Too stupid to comprehend, or too proud to learn, or too unfatuated to be convinced, although they are surrounded on almost every side by civilised and enlightened nations, their attachment to opinions which are founded in folly, and upheld by prejudice, does not diminish.'⁵⁴⁴

For Eton:

'Conquered Greece polished Rome, but the Conquerors were Romans. Conquered Greece did not polish Turkey, for the conquerors were Turks. The insensibility of these barbarians is astonishing... they have not caught one spark; they gaze with unfeeling stupidity on the wonder and boast of art and destroy them... where ignorance, tyranny, superstition and gross sensuality only dwell in sad and stupidly solemn pomp, or issuing out with savage fury, lay waste the country round, and imbrue their hands in the blood of the helpless, murdering without remorse those they have conquered.'⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴⁰ A. Hill: *A Full and Just Account of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire in all its Branches*; (London; 1733); p. 8.

⁵⁴¹ A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 151.

⁵⁴² Eton in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 151.

⁵⁴³ W. Hunter: *Travels in the Year 1792*; (London; 1796); p. 394.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid; p. 353.

⁵⁴⁵ Eton: A Survey; in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 338.

Chateaubriand, likewise, holds:

‘Unlike the Romans, the Turks never exploit the natural wealth of a country, nor the labour of the conquered populations, instead, all land in the hands of the Turks becomes arid. These invaders belong to the barbarian races in the measure that they destroy everything, and never construct anything. The Turks never plan for the future, never plan the economy, and never seek to preserve anything, instead, they act like vampires, bleeding their victim until it expires, and then they move onto another.’⁵⁴⁶

And again:

‘Devastated fields belong to Turks who own three or four thousand olive trees, and who, in a harem of Constantinople devour the heritage of Aristomenes.’⁵⁴⁷

For Le Bon, writing in 1884:

‘The successors of the Arabs in Egypt are the Turks. The Turks, although great warriors, who made Europe tremble, and who expanded the influence of Islam, were only powerful militarily. They never achieved any advance in science, trade or arts. And like people who do not progress, they go backward. Fatally the hour of decadence had arrived for them. The end of the Arab civilization in the Orient dates from the day their (the Arab) empire fell in the hands of the Turks. It is in Egypt that the decline is at its worst. Arts and sciences died with Selim (the Turkish ruler). Corruption and backwardness, and misrule set in. Nobody, today, ignores what is the lot of the regions under the Turks. At the doors of the major cities, even, Smyrne, for instance, brigands rule, and there are pirates even in the seas of the Bosphore and Marmara.’⁵⁴⁸

Von Grunebaum agrees with this:

‘The Arab countries, especially that had been the centre of Muslim civilisation, submitted apathetically to the twin domination of orthodoxy and the Turks. It was only with Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt in 1798 that, through the impact of Europe and the rise of local nationalism in its wake, Muslim civilisation regained the willingness to change, to experiment, to risk, in short, to live.’⁵⁴⁹

Stoddard describes the Turks as:

⁵⁴⁶ Abridged from Chateaubriand: *Itineraire*; op cit; pp. 934; 974.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 790.

⁵⁴⁸ G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation*; op cit; pp. 460-1.

⁵⁴⁹ G.E. Von Grunebaum: *Islam*, (Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1961); p. 29.

‘A dull witted folk with few ideas, the Turks could do two things superlatively well—obey orders and fight like devils...

Rising everywhere to positions of authority, the Turkish mercenaries began to act like masters. Opening the eastern frontiers, they let in fresh swarms of their countrymen, who now came, not as individuals, but in tribes or ‘hordes’ under their hereditary chiefs, wandering about at their own sweet will, settling where they pleased, and despoiling or evicting the local inhabitants...

Now, what was the primitive Turkish nature? First and foremost, it was that of the professional soldier. Discipline was the Turk’s watchword. No originality of thought, and but little curiosity. Few ideas ever penetrated the Turk’s slow mind, and the few that did penetrate were received as military orders, to be obeyed without question and adhered to without reflection. Such was the being who took over the leadership of Islam from the Saracens’ failing grasp.

No greater misfortune could have occurred both for Islam and for the world at large. For Islam it meant the rule of dull witted bigots under which enlightened progress was impossible.⁵⁵⁰

A number of factors were seen as the cause for such Turkish inferior status and enmity to learning and science. According to Thompson, the Turks live a sluggish, indolent and inactive life; they hardly cultivate their land and are indifferent towards travelling or arts and sciences. These strange habits can only be explained with reference to their inherent characteristics as a nation, because, although, “they live under the same heaven and possess the same countries the ancient Greeks did, they are far from being animated by the same spirit or endeavouring to imitate such noble examples.” Instead they pass time in coffee houses or in their harems.⁵⁵¹

For Tott, the laziness of the Turkish people is another reflection of despotism. It is particularly apparent in the way in which they treat their property and their environment. They neither renovate their houses nor plant new trees; they enjoy nature and surroundings as they are because, ‘under a despotic government, a man must enjoy the trees that he can find; he has not the time to see them grow up.’⁵⁵²

⁵⁵⁰ L. Stoddard: *The New World of Islam*; op cit; pp. 9-10.

⁵⁵¹ C. Thompson: *Travels of the Late Charles Thompson...*; (London; 1767); p. 139.

⁵⁵² Baron F. Tott: *Memoirs of the Baron Tott on the Turks and the Tartars*; (London; 1785); p. 100.

The reason for the Turks banning learning, according to Hill, is because it is dangerous for the maintenance of a despotic regime:

‘But in governments tyrannical and arbitrary, learning like spur to horses of a fiery nature, only serves to make them feel, and hate their servitude, exciting warm, and dangerous sparks of courage in their breasts, whose sure effects produce an eager, and undaunted inclination to expose their valued lives and fortunes, for redeeming gloriously the ravished charms of liberty and prosperity.’⁵⁵³

For similar reasons, according to Eton, Turkey is the “refuge of fanatical ignorance.” Their religion encourages the “grossest ignorance” and “superstition” and, in this manner the Turkish character is sterile for the development of arts and sciences.’⁵⁵⁴

For Eton, government and religion pose constant barriers against the improvement of the Turks, because openness of mind cannot exist where despotism renders everyone suspicious, and their intolerant religion cannot cultivate liberality and science. Since their religion teaches them that their faith is the purest and they are the wisest of mankind, they don’t attempt to “copy their more enlightened neighbours.”⁵⁵⁵

Furthermore:

‘The suspicions of despotism must ever tend to degrade and brutalise its unhappy subjects. Few are the inducements which the torpid Turk has to apply himself to science, and those few are annihilated by the fear of exciting distrust in the government.’⁵⁵⁶

As Cirakman notes, this is also one of the recurring themes in eighteenth-century fiction about the Ottomans, whose source of inspiration could be traceable in the Persian Letters of Montesquieu.⁵⁵⁷

In a play written by a certain Nicholson the Sultan descends from the height of despotism and becomes “the most pusillanimous slave” to gain the heart of a noble European woman who is a slave in the seraglio. Sultan Osman is so ridiculously consumed with these passions that he doesn’t even care about the affairs of the state. Osman, at one point, tells himself that:

“To subdue this Christian is the favourite object of my soul. I have it more at heart even than the interests of my empire. I

⁵⁵³ A. Hill: *A Full and just Account*; op cit; p. 60.

⁵⁵⁴ W. Eton: *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*; (London; 1798); p. 12; and 200.

⁵⁵⁵ Eton: *A Survey*; in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 151.

⁵⁵⁶ Eton: *A Survey*; p. 196.

⁵⁵⁷ A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 155,

had rather conquer this beauteous enemy than millions of kingdoms.⁵⁵⁸

Turkish ignorance is, however, thought to be preferable to its removal, otherwise the Turks could become a formidable power against Europe. Craven, thus, says:

‘Perhaps it is lucky for Europe that the Turks are idle and ignorant; the immense power of this empire might have, were it peopled with the industrious and the ambitious, would make it the mistress of the world. At present it only serves as a dead wall to intercept the commerce and battles which other powers might create with one another.’⁵⁵⁹

4. The Fallacy of Turkish Barbarism

As noted in previous chapters, Western negative depictions of Muslims, throughout the centuries have only been given legitimacy and turned into truths by mere repetition, even though such depictions fundamentally contradict truth and reality. The same holds with respect to the Turks, which as Schwoebel, referring to renaissance images of the Turks, notes:

‘Accounts repeated over and over cannot for the most part have been distinguished for their accuracy and objectivity, especially where they involved Muslim affairs. Yet tales transmitted in this manner constituted a significant share of the common stock of Europe’s knowledge of the East; and in a society largely illiterate they weighed heavily in the formation of Western attitudes toward the Ottoman Turks. For countless common folk the returned pilgrim served as the single, direct link with the mysterious and frightening world of the Levant. His meagre fund of half truths regarding the Turks gave rise to exaggerated and bizarre concoctions among his fellow citizens.’⁵⁶⁰

Many Pilgrims and travellers, for instance, carried stories about the Turks, which in the main were neither complete nor accurate, and were

⁵⁵⁸ Nicholson: *Orlondo and Seraphina: A Turkish Story*; (London; 1787); pp. 31-2.

⁵⁵⁹ E. Craven: *A Journey through the Crimea....*; (Dublin 1789); p. 272.

⁵⁶⁰ R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow*; op cit; p. 177.

further distorted as time and distance separated the story teller from his source.⁵⁶¹

The persistent labelling of the Turks, whether the early Seljuks (10th-13th century) or the Ottomans (13th-20th century), as barbaric, cruel fiends and enemies of science and progress has no basis in reality, but has other motivations. With regard to the Seljuks, hostility to them, as to the Mamluks for that matter, derives from the simple fact that during the Western Christian onslaught on the Islamic lands in the crusades era (1095-1291), they were the main foes of the crusaders. Any person reading the history of the crusades, from Muslim or Christian sources, old or new, will realise this, and if it had not been for the Seljuk Turks, Muslims in their millions could have been totally exterminated.⁵⁶² As for the Ottomans, the same argument holds for, from the 13th until the early 20th century, they were the main Christian military foe, engaging Christendom on countless fronts.⁵⁶³ It was the Ottomans, who, as history shows, protected the entire Muslim world from Western annihilation.⁵⁶⁴ Thus, there is little surprise in coming across such vilification of the Ottomans, vilification which is amply noted by Fisher⁵⁶⁵ and Davenport, who has also concluded that the Turks' being the principal Islamic foe of the Christian West for centuries was the major reason for violent anti-Turkish rhetoric.⁵⁶⁶ Galland (1646-1715) also earlier observed how the Turks were wrongly vilified: it suffices

⁵⁶¹ Ibid; p. 196.

⁵⁶² Ibn al-Adim: *Bughyat al-talab*; partial ed Ali Sevim (Ankara; 1976).

-T.A. Archer: *The Crusades* (T. Fisher Unwin; London; 1894).

-Ibn al-Athir: *Tarikh al-dawla al-Atabakiya Muluk al-Mawsil*; in Recueil des Historiens des Croisades (Orientaux); 11/ii (Paris; 1871), p. 1-394.

-Ibn al-Athir: *Kitab al-kamil*; ed K.J. Tornberg; 12 vols (Leiden; 1851-72).

-Baha Eddin: Ibn Shadad: *Nawadir asultania*; in Recueil des Historiens Orientaux; III (Paris; 1884).

-C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (The Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund; London; 1897).

-G.W. Cox: *The Crusades* (Longman; London; 1874).

-Z. Oldenbourg: *The Crusades*; tr from Fr by A. Carter (Weinfeld and Nicolson; London; 1965).

⁵⁶³ A. C. Hess: *The Forgotten Frontier* (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1978).

Samuel Chew: *The Crescent and the Rose* (New York; 1974).

P. Coles: *The Ottoman Impact on Europe* (Thames and Hudson; 1974).

⁵⁶⁴ Refer to the Turkish assistance to the Maghreb in face of Christian onslaught in the 16th century, or the Turks fighting the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. See, for Instance, A. C. Hess: *The Forgotten Frontier*, op cit.

⁵⁶⁵ G. Fisher: *The Barbary Legend*; op cit.

⁵⁶⁶ J. Davenport: *An Apology for Mohammed and the Koran*; op cit; .

to name them to signify to Europeans a coarse, barbarous, thoroughly ignorant nation.⁵⁶⁷

The generally-held view that the Turks were intolerant and cruel to the Christians is contradicted by historical reality. In general, the Ottomans continued the policy of religious toleration which they had inherited from the Arabs, Glubb notes.⁵⁶⁸ Othman (1281-1326), the founder of the Ottoman nation, gained the reputation of a ruler who might be safely followed, and under whose protection Christians found security both from other Turks and from the exactions of their own emperor.⁵⁶⁹ Succeeding him, Orkhan (1326-1359) had to rule over large numbers of Christians, and many of the peasants from neighbouring territories sought his protection, for, as the Greek writers record, his Christian subjects were less taxed than those of the Empire.⁵⁷⁰ He protected them, left them the use of their churches, and pursued a policy of reconciliation during all his reign.⁵⁷¹ Subsequently, Bertrandon de la Broquière, who was sent by Philip of Burgundy East in 1432, travelled to study the situation with a view to the Crusade, and wrote his impressions.⁵⁷² Passing through Turkish territory and through Serbia, he noted prosperity and good cultivation of the land; and also noted that towns and cities have a mixed population of Greeks and Turks, the latter described as thrifty and clean and hardworking.⁵⁷³

When they reached the Orient after conquering the Balkans, the Ottomans strengthened confessional dialogue, allowing a revival, as unexpected as spectacular, of Arab Christianity.⁵⁷⁴ As soon as they entered Constantinople, the Ottomans recognised the collective existence of religious minorities, instituting them into nations, giving them autonomy in religious matter, judicial, cultural, and health-care affairs.⁵⁷⁵ The Ottomans sought the participation of their former enemies: officially Muslim, the Empire transformed itself, into a Greco-Turkish Diarchy which was to last until the rising and the independence of Greece (1821-

⁵⁶⁷ A. Gunny: *Images*; op cit; p.45.

⁵⁶⁸ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p.251.

⁵⁶⁹ Sir Edwin Pears: *The Ottoman Turks*; op cit; p.661.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid*; p.663.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid*.

⁵⁷² Published with Intro and notes by Ch Shefer; in *Recueil de voyage et de documents*; XII; (Paris; 1892); Engl tr. in *Wright's Early Travels in Palestine*; (1848).

⁵⁷³ D. Vaughan: *Europe and the Turk*; op cit; pp 50-1.

⁵⁷⁴ Y. Courbage, P. Fargues: *Chrétiens et Juifs dans l'Islam Arabe et Turc*, (Payot, Paris, 1997); p.7.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid*; p.9.

1830).⁵⁷⁶ During the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent, Christian villagers of Southern Greece preferred Turkish rule to that of the Venetians, and Christian villages in Hungary voluntarily chose Turkish government in preference to that of their fellow country-men.⁵⁷⁷ In Istanbul, and in an Anatolia profoundly Islamised, the Christian and Jewish populations emerged again after the Islamisation of the previous four centuries. Christianity experienced a revival from 8% in the census of 1520 and 1570, to 16% in the 19th century.⁵⁷⁸ Around 1881 the non-Muslim population, especially Greeks and Armenians, reached the peak of their growth. By that date, they made up 21% of the population in the territory of present-day Turkey.⁵⁷⁹ The whole of the population of the Anatolian provinces increased between 1831 and 1881-93 at a rate of 15.7 per thousand per annum, but, as always in Ottoman history, the Christians grew more quickly (19.8 per thousand) than the Muslims (15 per thousand).⁵⁸⁰

Under the Ottomans, Christian and Jewish religious authorities had the exclusive control of their cult, of schools and their judicial system.⁵⁸¹ Whilst for the Jews, it was amongst the Turks that they found not just acceptance, but even promotion and, more importantly for them, asylum after being persecuted elsewhere.⁵⁸² They were protected from Christians, too, for Jews could not even venture out on Easter in Athens.⁵⁸³ Free from military service, the Christian and Jewish populations had far greater opportunities to be socially mobile, helped by the quasi-monopoly they maintained over the most dynamic sources of society and economy.⁵⁸⁴ They kept this status during the whole period of the Ottoman Empire, down to the 20th century. 'Their commercial genius gave them a virtual monopoly over commerce and a considerable share of the wealth of the country.... The talents of the Armenians were truly indispensable to his masters and the general

⁵⁷⁶ D. Kitsikis: *l'Empire Ottoman*, (Paris, PUF, 1985) in Y. Courbage, P. Fargues: *Chrétiens et Juifs*; op cit; p.205.

⁵⁷⁷ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p. 251.

⁵⁷⁸ For the 16th century: O.L. Barkan: Contribution à l'étude de la conjoncture démographique des pays Méditerranéens au xvi^e siècle, *Actes de l'Union internationale pour l'étude scientifique de la population*, (London, 1969). For the 19th see K. Karpas: *Ottoman population, 1830-1914, Demographic and Social Characteristics*, (Madison, the University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

⁵⁷⁹ Y. Courbage and P. Fargues: *Christians and Jews*; op cit; p. 105.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid; p.206

⁵⁸² J. Davenport: *An Apology*; op cit; pp 126-7.

⁵⁸³ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁴ Y. Courbage and P. Fargues: *Christians and Jews*; op cit; p. 107.

tolerance which the Turk accorded him showed that this fact was recognised.⁵⁸⁵

In relation to the supposed Turkish cruelties, once more reality on the ground contradicts the generally-held assumptions. Unlike the rhetoric which associates cruelty with Muslims, terrible deeds were instead the work of Western Christendom as here noted by F. Osborne, who spoke of the French massacre of the St Batholomew:

‘The foulness of which story hath not yet been matched by Mahumet or any of his disciples never found to have borne such bitter fruit.’⁵⁸⁶

To him, the Ottoman Government has far superior characteristics to the European monarchies of his age. He admires the system of meritocracy, administration of justice, and religious toleration - all of which make him believe that this is an incorruptible system.⁵⁸⁷ De la Croix, an interpreter at Constantinople, witnessed none of the barbaric cruelty associated generally with the Ottomans.⁵⁸⁸ In his unpublished *Memoires*, he recognised that the Ottomans allowed the same freedom of worship for Christians that they could find in France and that Christian ceremonies were not hindered by the Turks by any means. Equally, De La Croix was impressed by the treatment of slaves, noting that their spiritual needs were not at all neglected, benefiting from chapels inside the prisons where they could pray in all liberty. He even noticed three Roman Catholic churches,⁵⁸⁹ and concluded that:

‘We should agree, it is better to fall into the hands of the worst Bey (Turk) galley, than into the hands of the Viceroy of Naples.’⁵⁹⁰

As Fisher notes:

‘The picture of a stern and ultimately triumphant struggle in the Levant and Mediterranean seas by a united Christendom against the relentless aggression of barbarous or semi-barbarous Turks is clearly a fallacious one... [Contemporary] Christian peoples not only regarded the Turks as more civilized than the Spaniards and French, but even sought to

⁵⁸⁵ *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire*; (London; 1916); in Y. Courbage and P. Fargues: *Christians and Jews under Islam*; op cit; p. 107.

⁵⁸⁶ F. Osborne: *Political Reflections upon the Government of the Turks*; (Oxford; 1656); p. 17.

⁵⁸⁷ F. Osborne: *Political Reflection*; pp. 31-2; 75-6; 99-101; in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 78.

⁵⁸⁸ In A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p.18.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁰ De la Croix; in N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; op cit; p. 309.

place themselves under their protection and government,⁵⁹¹ while the Spaniards themselves appear to have regarded the Turks as honourable foes.⁵⁹² Kheir-eddin Barbarossa, who has, by some curious process, come to be depicted in our latest histories as an ‘infamous character’ and ‘professional pirate’, was in his own age reputed by Christians generally to be a wise statesman, an able administrator, and a great soldier, noted for his orderly and civilized conduct of war and courted in turn or simultaneously by the greatest princes, spiritual and temporal, of the Mediterranean. His career was the subject of intensive propaganda for political purposes, not only in his own lifetime but nearly three centuries later.⁵⁹³

For centuries, to this day, the views about Turkish cruelties have ignored the real cruelties of which the Turks had been victims. Daniel notes how the late 19th-century British Prime Minister, Gladstone, for instance, was convinced of the substantial truth of the allegations against the Turkish soldiers. He entirely ignored those committed by the Bulgarians against the Muslim villagers and Jewish town populations, although these were apparently equally substantiated. It is hard not to conclude that Gladstone gave Christians the benefit of understanding and sympathy he denied to Muslims. The Turks he wrote:

‘Were, from the black day they entered Europe, the one great anti-human specimen of humanity.’⁵⁹⁴

In reality, the massacres of Turkish populations in the Balkans in the wake of the decline of the Ottoman Empire are some of the most dreadful of European history.⁵⁹⁵ Likewise, every single Turkish town or city that fell to Christian armies was followed by the wholesale massacre of its population.⁵⁹⁶

Under the Ottomans, slaves, just like other citizens, had their rights, and uniquely in the whole history of slavery, it is even said that a slave might

⁵⁹¹ *H.H.W.* xxiv. 362; p. 154, n. 3.

⁵⁹² Note sympathy with loss of Dragut’s son; tribute to gallant end of Kheir Eddin’s grandson, Duro, *Armada Espanala*, ii. 183–4; eulogies of Aruj and Dragut, Lane-Poole, pp. 52–3 and 149; almost simultaneous romances of Cicala and Kheir-eddin with Turkish and Italian captives.

⁵⁹³ Jurien classed him with Nelson, St. Vincent, and Alexander and above Blake, also praising his colonial administration; G. Fisher: *Barbary Legend*; op cit; pp. 9-10.

⁵⁹⁴ In N. Daniel: *Islam; Europe*; op cit; p. 378.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid*; for some such instances.

⁵⁹⁶ S. Lane Poole: *Turkey*; Khayats; Beirut; 1966 ed; originally published in 1908.

summon his master before the Qadi (judge) for ill usage.⁵⁹⁷ It was also alleged that if their tempers were so opposite, that it was impossible for them to agree, the Qadi would oblige his master to sell him.⁵⁹⁸ Captives who were held in households of private individuals, as Arnold notes, were no worse off than domestic servants in the rest of Europe.⁵⁹⁹ Moreover, according to Lybyer:

‘The Ottoman system deliberately took slaves and made them ministers of state; it took boys... and made them courtiers and the husbands of princesses; it took young men whose ancestors had borne the Christian name for centuries and made them rulers in the greatest of Mohammedan states.’⁶⁰⁰

The majority of the Christian slaves who converted to Islam, as Arnold points out, changed their religion of their own free choice;⁶⁰¹ and ‘the Christian embassies were never sure from day to day that some of their fellow countrymen that had accompanied them to Constantinople as domestic servants, might not turn Turk.’⁶⁰² Turkish lenient treatment was not just hidden away from opinion to maintain the demonic stature of the Turk; it was always regarded unfavourably as by Queen Elizabeth’s envoy, William Harborne.⁶⁰³ And Delacroix, himself, did not forget his job as a diplomat, and hence saw such Turkish humanity as a fruit of political expediency; that somehow, by allowing slaves and prisoners freedom to trade and marry, it stopped them from seeking to escape.⁶⁰⁴ Chevalier d’Arvieux, on the other hand, was not much appreciated for his account of Turkish humanity. His memoirs were fiercely criticised in a treatise called *Lettres Critiques d’Hadgy Mohammed Effendi* attributed to Petis de la Croix,⁶⁰⁵ which highlights the enduring hostile views of the Turks.

With regard to arts, learning and sciences, the Turkish contribution was very high. Far from causing the decline of Islamic civilization, the Turks

⁵⁹⁷ T. Arnold: *The Preaching of Islam*; op cit; p. 175.

⁵⁹⁸ G.A. Menavino: *Vita et Legge Turchesca*; (Venice; 1573); p. 96.

⁵⁹⁹ T. Arnold: *The Preaching of Islam*; (M. Ashraf Publishers; Lahore; 1979); pp. 174-5.

⁶⁰⁰ A.H. Lybyer: *The Government of the Ottoman Empire*; (Harvard University Press; 1913); pp 45-6.

⁶⁰¹ T. Arnold: *The Preaching of Islam*; op cit; p. 176.

⁶⁰² G.C. von den Driesch: *Historische Nachricht von der Rom...*; (Nurenberg; 1723); p. 132.

⁶⁰³ In N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; op cit; p. 308.

⁶⁰⁴ De La Croix: In A Guny; *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 18.

⁶⁰⁵ In D. Brahimi: *Opinions*; op cit; p. 71.

in fact rescued it from collapse and gave it a new lease of life that lasted centuries longer.⁶⁰⁶ The early Turks, under their various appellations, sponsored some of the greatest scholars of Islam such as al-Khazini, Omar Khayyam, al-Jazari, etc.⁶⁰⁷ They also sponsored schools, madrasas, observatories, and built considerable numbers of scholarly institutions, besides promoting the study of all forms of sciences.⁶⁰⁸ The skills and refinements the Turks passed to others, including to the Christian West, constitute the foundation of many of our modern aspects of civilization.⁶⁰⁹ Turkish construction skills and techniques, for instance, opened new horizons for others to imitate from the middle ages down to the modern times.⁶¹⁰ Also, as Fisher writes:

‘Among the surprises that emerge from a perusal of Christian records and narratives of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are testimonials to the Turks as a highly civilized people, from both a moral and practical standpoint. Modern military science owes much to Turkish practices of those days, particularly in regard to engineering and the conduct of field operations, and also, perhaps, in connection with the discipline, training, and welfare of troops....

The unquestionable ability of the Turks to maintain law and order is the more unexpected in view of prevalent impressions of anarchy and bloodshed. In the eighteenth century Constantinople was said to be not only the largest city in Europe but the best policed.’⁶¹¹

With regard to Ottoman art, as Talbot Rice observes, it is wholly original, and distinct, owing in general little to Persia, and even if the

⁶⁰⁶ See:

-F. Wustenfeld: *Geschichte der arabischen aertze und Naturforscher*; Gottingen; 1840

-H. Suter: *Die Mathematiker und Astronomen der Araber und ihre Werke (1900)*; APA, Oriental Press, Amsterdam, reedit; 1982.

-S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Golden Age and Decline of Islamic Civilisation*; Bayt al-Hikma; Manchester; 2006, under appropriate sections.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ See:

-J Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession*; Cambridge University Press, 1987.

-S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Hidden Debt to Islamic Civilisation*; Bayt al-Hikma; Manchester; op cit; 2005.

⁶¹⁰ See, for instance:

-J.Harvey: *The Master Builders: Architecture in the Middle Ages*; Thames and Hudson, London, 1971.

-J. Harvey: The Development of Architecture, in *The Flowering of the Middle Ages*; ed J. Evans; Thames and Hudson; pp. 85-105.

⁶¹¹ G. Fisher: *Barbary Legend*; op cit; p.10.

ideas that were to form the basis of Ottoman architecture were adopted from Byzantium, the basic theme was so developed that almost at once it became a distinctive style.⁶¹² Ottoman achievements in art and architecture, well detailed in some works, also defy the image of Turkish barbarism and enmity to culture, and photographic evidence disproves the countless inanities told about Ottoman ineptness or enmity to arts.⁶¹³

Ottoman contributions to learning as a whole are considerable, and as Galland firmly believes, it is unjust to slander the Turks in this way, and he dismisses the idea that they were inferior to the Arabs and Persians in the sciences and literature common to these three nations. He maintains that they engaged in these pursuits almost from the beginning of the Empire, and that they have an unbroken succession of theologians and legal experts as well as historians.⁶¹⁴ Galland admires their prodigious quantity of books on Islamic theology, philosophy, physics, mathematics, history, treatises on rhetoric and grammar, poetry in Arabic, Persian and Turkish.⁶¹⁵ In a letter dated 25 February 1701 to P.D. Huet, former Bishop of Avranches, Galland expresses admiration for the way in which the Turks show their love of good books, spending considerable sums for the acquisition of manuscripts.⁶¹⁶ Galland is also struck by the existence of so many poets in Arabic, Turkish and Persian, apparently more numerous than those in other languages. He notices some 1,600 titles, which would occupy more than 2,000 volumes, dealing with Islamic history from the Hijra, the history of the great Muslim conquerors and the biographies of illustrious men in all professions.⁶¹⁷ Also writing in support of the Turks is another contemporary, Jean de Thevenot, nephew of Melchisedech Thevenot, one of the founders of the Academie des Sciences, who travelled through Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, and India, who describes the beautiful mosques of Istanbul, struck, as he was, by the fact that all these mosques had attached to them hospitals and schools where many poor students, who lacked the necessary means, were fed and taught.⁶¹⁸ A recently-published work also supports the view that, although Muslim science gradually died

⁶¹² D. Talbot Rice: *Islamic Art*; (Thames and Hudson; London; 1979); p. 183.

⁶¹³ O. Aslanapa: *Turkish Art and Architecture* (1971); E. Atil, ed: *Turkish Art* (1980); G. Goodwin: *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (1971).

⁶¹⁴ In A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p.45.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid; p.46.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid; p.37.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid; p.44.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid; p.13.

out in nearly the whole Islamic realm after the 13th century, considerable numbers of scholars, including mathematicians, astronomers, and architects, thrived in Turkey between that date and subsequent centuries.⁶¹⁹ And finally, in the face of the brutal onslaught on the Muslim world from the time of the crusades (1095-1291) down to the colonial period (19th-20th centuries), if there is any survival of Muslim heritage, particularly written, it is due in great measure to the Turks.

⁶¹⁹ B. Rosenfeld and E. Ihsanoglu: *Mathematicians, Astronomers and Other Scholars of Islamic Civilisation*; Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture; Istanbul; 2003.

Four

THE MUSLIM AS ‘CRUEL OPPRESSOR’

Intolerance, oppression of women, violence and barbaric fanaticism are the four constituents of daily Western depictions of Islam and its adherents. They are regurgitated in every part of the Western world, and expressed in all possible forms of communication: lectures, speeches, broadcast, religious sermons, films, literature... The image of the bearded monster cruelly oppressing its women, slaying innocents left and right in the most barbaric fashion, is, indeed, the most enduring image conveyed by Western culture of Islam and Muslims, ceaseless propaganda to fill everyone with the utmost disgust and hatred of any Muslim subject. Yet again, reality reveals a completely different picture from such depictions, as will be highlighted in the following, which focuses on the alleged Muslim intolerance and oppression of women.

1. ‘Muslim Intolerance’

It is remarkable, how in the middle of the 9th century, reason for the first, and most serious ideological onslaught against Islam on the part of the so-called Christian martyrs in Spain was because what they resented most in Islam was its tolerance. Lane Poole notes how

‘The very tolerance of the Moors only exasperated such fervent souls; they preferred to be persecuted, like the saints of old; they longed to be martyrs, and they were indignant with the Moslems, because they would not ‘persecute them for righteousness’ sake’ and ensure them the kingdom of heaven.’⁶²⁰

These ‘martyrs’ had to resort to repeated insults against the Prophet in mosques to be eventually granted what they sought: martyrdom.⁶²¹

This incident highlights how Islam, which was resented for its tolerance during the Middle Ages, today is resented for the very opposite: its intolerance. It seems the faith of Islam has changed from the Middle Ages to our day, but this is not the case. The fact is that it is accusations against Islam that have shifted to suit the circumstances of Western Christendom and its aims. During the Middle Ages, in the Western mindset, it was the concepts of intolerance and martyrdom that dominated, and tolerance was despised, whilst today it is the reverse. In both periods, though, Islam was attacked: for its tolerance in the Middle Ages and for its reverse today (which is also the case for sexuality, Islam reviled for being sexually lax in the Middle Ages, and Islam reviled today for being sexually repressive; both accusations made by Western Christendom, and in both instances the West claiming to be in the right).

The following shows that Western claims in relation to Islamic intolerance are contradicted by reality.

⁶²⁰ S. Lane-Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; (Fisher Unwin; London; 1888); p. 84.

⁶²¹ The best outline of this episode can be found in N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit; chap 2.

a. Islam, Intolerance and Refutations:

According to generalised Western claims, Islam is fundamentally an intolerant faith in both practice and theory. J.D. Bate (1836-1923) claims that the Muslims are naturally opposed to Christianity and are

‘More difficult to convert than even the Jew. It is this animosity against Christ.... that leads to Muhammedanism being, like Romanism, a distinctly persecuting agency. It is the true spirit of the Anti Christ’.⁶²²

Bate also contrasts Islam’s supposedly ‘bloody conquest’ with Christianity’s supposed ‘peaceful propagation,’ claiming that:

‘In every nation where the conquests of the religion spread, the conquest was the conquest of force and not of reason. Men became Mussulmans because that was the only course open to them (by which they) could retain possession of political freedom and equal rights.’⁶²³

Kung, for his part, cites the Catholic theologian Hermann Stieglecker,⁶²⁴ who speaks of the fall of Christendom in the Near East and North Africa, as partly due to:

‘The lamentable turmoil rending the Christian world and the waves of fear and shock unleashed everywhere by the Muslim battalions as they stormed ahead.’⁶²⁵

E.A. Freeman, in his *History*, says that Mohammed ‘soars above every other man recorded in the history of the East,’ but thought Islam ‘an object of abhorrence... essentially an obstructive, intolerant system.’ Mohammed might not have been ‘the Antichrist of scripture,’ but Islam was ‘emphatically anti-Christian,’ the ‘bitterest foe to Christian faith and Western law.’⁶²⁶

For Cox and Marks, writing in 2003, in Western societies, pluralism is encouraged and realized, a number of political parties thrive, and free elections by secret ballot are carried out. Ideological traditional Islamic and Islamist societies, on the other hand, are monolithic, intolerant of dissent, and, de facto, lacking in individual freedoms. Control is attempted over all aspects of life in the name of Islam.⁶²⁷

⁶²² J.D. Bate: *The Claims of Ishmael*; (London; W. Allen; 1884); p. 177.

⁶²³ Ibid; p. 303.

⁶²⁴ Hermann Stieglecker: *The Teaching of Islam*; (1960).

⁶²⁵ In H. Kung: *Christianity*; op cit; p. 115.

⁶²⁶ E.A. Freeman: *The History and Conquests of the Saracens*; (Oxford: John Henry and James Parker; 1856; London Mc Millan 1876); 3rd ed; p. 72.

⁶²⁷ C. Cox-J. Marks: *The West, Islam and Islamism*; op cit; pp. 47-9.

These and similar assertions are contradicted by reality. As Herbelot remarked long ago, the second chapter of the Qur'an makes it clear that forcible conversion is banned in Islam, quoting the passage in question.⁶²⁸ Glubb finds that 7th-century Muslims had abstained from persecution and had permitted Jews and Christians to practise their own laws and to elect their own judges. Nearly a thousand years later, people in Europe were still being tortured and burned alive for their faith. And in general, the Ottoman continued the policy of religious toleration which they had inherited from the Arabs.⁶²⁹

Forster insists that in North Africa, Islam flourished apart from reliance on 'political domination' and that its 'votaries' were unshackled by the restraints imposed by a Muslim government.⁶³⁰ And for centuries, until not long ago, as Voltaire points out

'No Christian nation suffers the existence on its soil of a mosque, whilst the Turks allow the Greeks to have churches.'⁶³¹

And the same Voltaire, by no means a supporter of Islam, reminds us how it was not by the force of arms that Islam established itself 'in the greater parts of our hemisphere,' but by enthusiasm and persuasion.⁶³²

As Scott notes, Muslims proved to be something

'Very different from the incarnate demons, which a distorted imagination had painted them. They were found to be lenient, generous, humane. 'The law of Mohammed' had specifically designated the privileges of victory and the rights of the vanquished. The latter were not slow to recognise and accept the advantages arising from a speedy and unreserved submission, and were thus enabled to participate in the benefits of the civilization, almost from the very beginning inaugurated by their rulers.'⁶³³

Throughout Islamic rule, from the early times to this day, whether East or West of the Islamic realm, whether under the Arabs or under the Turks, all minorities benefited from freedom and equality in opportunities that cannot be equalled even in any of today's Western powers. Caliph Al-Mustasim (833-842), for instance, had two Christian ministers, one of whom was for finance. Bennet notes that many

⁶²⁸ Herbelot's *Bibliothèque orientale*, in the article DIN; 1777 ed; Vol I; pp 604-5.

⁶²⁹ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p. 251.

⁶³⁰ C. Forster: *Mohametanism Unveiled*; (London; James Duncan and John Cochran; 1829); i. p. 15.

⁶³¹ Voltaire: *Essai sur les Moeurs*; Ch XCIII; *Oeuvres Complètes*; Vol XII; p. 95.

⁶³² Voltaire quoted in Rodrigo de Zayas: *Les Morisques*; op cit; p.194.

⁶³³ S.P. Scott: *History of the Moorish Empire*; Vol II, op cit; p.183.

Christians held high positions as physicians and secretaries, and moved within Ummayyad and Abbasid society with ease; and the only repressive measures against them may have been in response to Christians abusing their privileges.

‘Regarding themselves superior, they sometimes used their positions to mock Islam.’⁶³⁴

Today, whilst the sight of Christian ministers and prime ministers, heads of states and very high officials is generalised throughout the Muslim world, the only sight that is afforded in any Western country is that of a Muslim minor figure.

Contrary to what Western opinion-making overwhelmingly claims, historical evidence proves, instead, Western Christian intolerance, as Western Christendom has always eliminated the Muslim minority in its midst. Measures to pressurise Muslims living amongst Christians in Europe were applied until in the end they were eliminated. The Fourth Lateran Council, during the pontificate of Innocent III (1198-1261), for instance, imposed distinctive dress on the Muslims (canon 68), and barred them from holding public office over Christians (c.69).⁶³⁵ Pope Clement V declared the Muslim presence amidst Christians ‘an insult to the Creator.’⁶³⁶ In Sicily, from Gregory IX (Pope 1227-1241) to Boniface VIII (1294-1303), the popes hounded the successive Sicilian lords to deal with the Muslims and suppress their presence, and frequently listed the mere existence of the colony among the *casus belli* for the series of crusades that Pope Innocent IV and his successors launched against the Sicilian rulers.⁶³⁷

The bitter and inflammatory rhetoric with which the popes consistently assailed the Muslims and often their royal masters, reveals the depth and character of their animosity.⁶³⁸ The Muslims were eventually all eliminated in Sicily, and Pope Boniface VIII was delighted at the final destruction of the Muslim Italian colony in 1300.⁶³⁹ In Spain, likewise,

⁶³⁴ C. Bennett: *Victorian Images of Islam*; op cit; p.3.

⁶³⁵ Lucy K Pick: Rodrigo Jimenez de Rada and the Jews, Pragmatism and patronage in 13th century Toledo: *Viator* 28; pp 203-22; at p. 204.

⁶³⁶ V. Green: *A New History of Christianity*; (Sutton Publishing; Stroud; 1996); pp.90-1.

⁶³⁷ Housley: The Italian Crusades; 40; 62; 64-5 In J.P. Lomax: Frederick II, His Saracens, and the Papacy, in *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam*, (J.V. Tolan ed); op cit; pp. 175-97; at p. 189.

⁶³⁸ Ibid; p. 179.

⁶³⁹ Housley: The Italian crusades; p. 65. In J.P. Lomax: Frederick II, His Saracens; p. 189.

in 1266, Clement IV (d.1268), urged the expulsion of the Muslims, telling Jayme of Aragon, that his reputation would suffer greatly

‘...If in view of temporal profit he should longer permit such opprobrium of God, such infection of Christendom as is caused by the horrible cohabitation of Moors and Christians.’⁶⁴⁰

In the early seventeenth century, as will be amply shown further on, Church pressure led to the mass removal of millions of Muslims in Spain. Of course modern Western historians falsify this matter related to the extermination of Muslims under Christian rule. Powell, for instance, holds that the Church had ‘concern but no direct objection to the existence of the Muslim colony (in Sicily)’.⁶⁴¹ Further distortions in relation to this issue will be considered further on.

b. ‘Muslim Intolerance’ and ‘Western Tolerance’: Further Evidence from History:

The early Islamic world was a great model of tolerance, but modern rewriting of history tends to obliterate this image. Muslim Spain (8th-13th centuries), for instance, was a great model of civilisation and cohabitation of diverse faiths, yet, modern historians, such as Menendez Pidal,⁶⁴² Lapeyre,⁶⁴³ Al-Bornoz⁶⁴⁴ etc, cleanse Muslim Spanish history of its positive aspects. One recent historian, Conrad, speaks of physical discrimination and daily humiliations inflicted by Muslims upon Christians and Jews; their over-taxation, and much worse, the cleansing of Jews and Christians from parts of cities, and herding them into segregated areas cut off from the Muslims, etc.⁶⁴⁵ The image built by Conrad relies on some limited evidence, which he generalizes to the whole history of Muslim Spain. He fails to take into account the crucial fact of the survival of Christianity under Islam. He fails to note how

⁶⁴⁰ H.C. Lea: *The Moriscos of Spain*; (Burt Franklin; New York; 1968); pp 4-5.

⁶⁴¹ J. M. Powell: The Papacy and the Muslim frontier, in *Muslims Under Latin Rule, 1100-1300*, editor J.M. Powel; (Princeton University Press, 1990); pp 175-203, especially pp. 186-98.

⁶⁴² Ramon Menéndez Pidal, *Espana y su historia* (Madrid: Minotaure, 1957)

⁶⁴³ H. Lapeyre: *Géographie de l’Espagne Morisque*; (SEVPEN, 1959).

⁶⁴⁴ S Albornoz, C. *L’Espagne Musulmane*, French translation of earlier Spanish version, (Paris, 1985).

⁶⁴⁵ P. Conrad: *Histoire de la Reconquista*; Que Sais je? (Presses Universitaire de France; Paris; 1998); pp. 22-3.

Christian populations were allowed all freedom and privileges, and how the Jews were protected under Islam.⁶⁴⁶ He sets aside the evidence about the leading part played by both Christians and Jews in Islamic government.⁶⁴⁷ Conrad also sets aside the fact that the Jews controlled the vast majority of Islamic trade and finance.⁶⁴⁸ And contrary to what he says, instead of Muslim cleansing of others, it was in fact the Muslims who were eliminated by Western Christendom. As Araya Goubet points out, religious tolerance - Islamic in inspiration - permitted the harmonious coexistence of Christians, Muslims and Jews. Christian dominance on the other hand, led to the exclusion, subjugation, and expulsion of the other two, starting in 1492.⁶⁴⁹

Such is the eagerness of most writers to malign Islam through distortions that they end up expressing conflicting statements. Thus, Montgomery Watt says that the Byzantine learned man, John of Damascus (674-749), had to be circumspect in his criticism of Islam (p.83), yet in page 70, the same Watt shows how John of Damascus expressed his diverging opinions of Islam.⁶⁵⁰ And how could Watt convince us of the intolerance of Islam, when this very John of Damascus was until his death a minister for Muslim Caliphs in Damascus.⁶⁵¹

Wiet *et al.* equally contradict themselves atrociously when they say:

‘The social disadvantage which these taxes placed upon non-Moslems was made even more burdensome because, from the ninth century on, it was made more immediately outwardly apparent. From that time they were obliged to wear a distinct sign of their condition, and not allowed to ride on horseback. There was thus a very strong inducement for them to undergo conversion to Islam, whether to be free of the heavy taxes or to enjoy the rights of citizenship.’⁶⁵²

Having explained that conditions forced people to convert to Islam, our authors then say:

⁶⁴⁶ See S. P. Scott: *History of the Moorish Empire*; op cit; vol 1.

⁶⁴⁷ See S. Lane Poole: *The Moors*; op cit; E. Levi Provençal: *Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane*; 3 vols; (Paris, Maisonneuve, 1953); S. P. Scott: *History*; op cit;

⁶⁴⁸ S.D. Goiten: *A Mediterranean Society*, 5 Vols, (Berkeley; 1967-90).

⁶⁴⁹ Guillermo Araya Goubet: *The Evolution of Castro's theory*; in *Americo Castro, and the meaning of Spanish Civilisation*. Edited By J. Rubia Barcia: (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1976); pp 41-66; p.51.

⁶⁵⁰ W.M. Watt: *Muslim Christian Encounters*; (Routledge; London; 1991); p.83 and 70.

⁶⁵¹ R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme devint Humain*, (Editions J.A, 1978); p.197.

⁶⁵² G. Wiet et al: *History of Mankind*; op cit; p.544.

‘The Arabs were at this stage indifferent - almost opposed - to conversion both from a sense of superiority and for budgetary reasons.... Islamisation now proceeded at such a pace that the caliphate became concerned to slow it down for fear that those who were racially of Arabic stock should be submerged.’⁶⁵³

Thus the Arabs are opposed to conversions because of fear that the Arabic stock might be submerged. This contradicts what these authors said before. This is also absurd when one considers that in the first century of Islam, most of the Muslims, 90% at least, had nothing Arab about them. Besides, the overwhelming majority of rulers in Islam, in the centre of the Caliphate itself, Baghdad, were not Arabs. Many of them were in fact children of slaves; only three Abbasid caliphs were born to free mothers.⁶⁵⁴

Undaunted, Wiet et al go on saying:

‘Such people (who converted to Islam) integrated themselves with a civilisation productive of a new social behaviour, on which there was no going back in the regions where the Moslem faith remained that of the majority.’⁶⁵⁵

Again, had Wiet et al read any book on Spain and Sicily after they were retaken by Christianity, they would have found that the Muslims living there preferred extermination to renouncing their Islamic faith. Wiet and his co-authors ought to be aware that one does not remain Muslim out of fear of the death penalty on apostates, for if this was the case, how can they explain the fact that millions of Muslims live in the West today and remain Muslim. The Western state is immensely powerful in protecting them from their fellow Muslims had they chosen to drop their Islamic faith.

Some of Islam’s leading ethnic groups and dynasties, Turks and North Africans (most particularly the Berber dynasties), have been painted as more ‘fanatical’ and excessively more intolerant than others. The Berber dynasties, for instance, have suffered in the writing of even the supposedly pro-Islamic authors such as Lane Poole.⁶⁵⁶ Some go even as far as blaming Berber and Seljuk Turk fanaticism and intolerance for not

⁶⁵³ Ibid; p.545.

⁶⁵⁴ G.E.Von Grunebaum: *Medieval Islam*, (The University of Chicago Press, 1954); p.202

⁶⁵⁵ G. Wiet et al: *History of Mankind*: op cit p.545.

⁶⁵⁶ S. Lane Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; op cit; pp. 175; 214; 217 etc.

just 'the persecution of Christians and Jews,' but also for the decadence of Islam.⁶⁵⁷ About the Turks, Eton says:

'It is only the flatterers who talk about the spirit of toleration in Turkey; in fact there is no trace of it, and to the contrary, Christians are continuously persecuted and maltreated if they don't deny their God; their children are brought up in the Muslim faith and made to fight against their fathers.'

Moreover, Eton claims

'That it is a frequent subject of discussion at the Court whether they should massacre all the Christians in the empire who would not embrace Islam.'⁶⁵⁸

Renan holds:

'Islam was in the hands of the Arabs, a refined and highly spiritual race, and the Persians, a race that leans strongly towards speculation; but it could not rule since the barbarians (Turks, Berbers, etc.) took over the lead of Islam. The Islamic world then entered in a period of ignorant brutality, from which it emerged only to fall into the mournful agony in which it is struggling at present.'⁶⁵⁹

In truth, Berber dynasties showed much tolerance not just to the Jews, but above all to the Christians in times when the very survival of Muslim North Africa was threatened by Christian crusades and piracy. The Archbishopric of Morocco continued until the 16th century under the Merinids who kept the protection granted to it by the (supposedly fanatic) Almohads.⁶⁶⁰ The Almohads protected Christian religious orders, both Franciscan and Dominican; those who came to the Maghreb under the rule of the sons of Al-Mansur (13th century) being warmly welcome.⁶⁶¹ The successors of Pope Honorius III many times thanked the Moroccan kings for their favour granted to the Christians and religious persons.⁶⁶² In the year 1233, which followed the death of El-Mamun and the advent of his son al-Rashid, Gregory IX wrote to the Emir hoping that 'one day he would recognise Christian truth', and thanked the Emir for his goodness towards Agnello, the Vicar of Fes, and for other minor brothers living in

⁶⁵⁷ F.B. Artz: *The mind, The Mind of the Middle Ages*; Third edition revised; (The University of Chicago Press, 1980); pp 175-6.

⁶⁵⁸ W. Eton: *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*; (London; 1798); p. 128.

⁶⁵⁹ E. Renan: *Averroes et l'Averroisme*, 4th edition, (Calman Levy, 1882); p. iii.

⁶⁶⁰ M.L. de Mas Latrie: *Traites de paix et de Commerce, et Documents Divers, Concernant les Relations des Chretiens avec les Arabes de l'Afrique Septentrionale au Moyen Age*, (Burt Franklin, New York, Originally Published in Paris, 1866); p.262.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid.p.71.

⁶⁶² Ibid.

his states.⁶⁶³ In 1246, Pope Innocent IV did not just recommend Vicar Loup to the good graces of the Moroccans,⁶⁶⁴ he requested the Emirs of Oriental Mauritania, the Kings of Tunis, Gafsa, and Bejaia to grant protection to the new holder.⁶⁶⁵ The situation of the minorities, Christian and Jewish, only deteriorated for short durations when external threats of invasion were acute. However, as Courbage and Fargues note, there have been no sign of massacres or deportations.⁶⁶⁶ This was not the case for Muslim minorities living amongst Christians, which were completely suppressed because of the supposed threat they represented.⁶⁶⁷

With regard to Turkish tolerance of others, all those who travelled to the Turkish realm in the 14th century and in subsequent centuries could see that all religions were to be found side by side in the vast pacific dominion of the Sultan, and that

‘Catholicism was seen to be freer in Constantinople and at Smyrna than at Paris and at Lyons; no law restraining its outward practice.’⁶⁶⁸

Under the Ottomans, Catholics, Lutherans, and Greeks in Europe often preferred Turkish protection or rule, and oppressed Christians fled to the freer and more enlightened atmosphere of Algiers just as the Hungarians did to Turkish territory.⁶⁶⁹ Until the First World War, Istanbul kept about 40% of non-Muslims, Christians and Jews.⁶⁷⁰ And both Christian and Jewish religious authorities had the exclusive control of the cult, of schools and the judicial system.⁶⁷¹ According to Byron:

‘The Ottomans, with all their defects, are not a people to be despised... If it is difficult to pronounce what they are, we can at least say what they are not: they are not treacherous, they are not cowardly, they do not burn heretics, they are not assassins, nor has an enemy advanced to their capital. They are faithful to their

⁶⁶³ Ibid; p.125.

⁶⁶⁴ Innocent IV to the Christians of Morocco, 31 Oct 1246.

⁶⁶⁵ M.L. de Mas Latrie: *Traites de paix*; op cit; p.125.

⁶⁶⁶ Y. Courbage, P. Fargues: *Chrétiens et Juifs*; op cit; p. 74.

⁶⁶⁷ This was not just the justification at the time, it is also the justification given by most Western historians explaining the elimination of Muslims from amongst Christians. See H. Lapeyre: *Géographie de l’Espagne*; op cit; etc.

⁶⁶⁸ J. Davenport: *An Apology for Mohammed*; op cit; pp.126-7.

⁶⁶⁹ Charrierel I; 295-309; plus see pastor: *The History of the Popes*; xi; pp 248-50; in G. Fisher: *Barbary Legend*; op cit; p. 71.

⁶⁷⁰ Y. Courbage, P. Fargues: *Chrétiens et Juifs*; op cit; p. 205.

⁶⁷¹ Y. Courbage, P. Fargues: *Chrétiens et Juifs*; op cit; p. 207.

sultan till he becomes unfit to govern, and devout to their God without an inquisition.⁶⁷²

Looking at more recent times, the same spirit of tolerance has prevailed in both Islamic North Africa and Turkey. The Muslim Maghrib, Courbage and Fargues insist, never had the equivalent of what happened on Christian soil, of Spanish Moors or Jews converted by force to Christianity under the Inquisition, before being expelled to North Africa.⁶⁷³

Contrary to Western assertions, tolerance, in fact, was an Islamic concept before being discovered by others. As Daniel points out, the very notion of toleration in Christendom was borrowed from Muslim practice.⁶⁷⁴ A place of early borrowing was the East during the crusades, where, Oldenbourg explains, the crusaders soon adopted the oriental mentality of which their countrymen from Europe were later to accuse them, and it was not difficult for them to discover that the Muslims 'the Infidels' were simply ordinary people, and all that was needed was a little common sense.⁶⁷⁵ Besides, as Daniel again notes, in the weariness of intolerance which affected northern Europe during and after the wars of religion in the 17th century, the Muslim example showed that the idea of toleration was practicable.⁶⁷⁶

Who is tolerant, and who is not, is, indeed, best demonstrated by one fact of crucial importance: which minority survived under whom. The Muslims have not survived under Western Christian rule throughout history, Christian minorities, on the other hand, have lived and to this day thrive under Islam. The examples of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, etc, are witness to the thriving status of Christianity amongst a Muslim majority. In this respect, 'Had the Saracens, Turks, and other Mohammedan tribes,' says Chatfield, 'adopted the same conduct towards the Christians as the European nations had practised towards the followers of the Koran, it is probable that the Christian religion would have been extinguished in the East.'⁶⁷⁷

Lewis also says:

⁶⁷² Lord Byron: Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, canto ii.lxxiv, note; in N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; op cit; pp. 218-9.

⁶⁷³ Y. Courbage, P. Fargues: *Chrétiens et Juifs*; op cit; p. 74.

⁶⁷⁴ N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; op cit; p.12

⁶⁷⁵ Z. Oldenbourg: *The Crusades*; tr by A. Carter; (Weidenfeld and Nicolson; London; 1965); p. 492.

⁶⁷⁶ N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit; p.303.

⁶⁷⁷ Chatfield, *Historical Review*; p. 311; In Note 2; p. 84; in J. Davenport: *An Apology for Mohammed*; op cit; p. 84.

‘Muslims were willing to tolerate significant differences in practice and even belief among themselves; they were also willing to concede a certain place in society to other, approved religions ... There is no equivalent to this tolerance in Christendom until the wars of religion finally convinced Christians that it was time to live and let live. During the eight centuries that Muslims ruled part of the Iberian Peninsula, Christians and also Jews remained and even flourished. The consequences of the Christian re-conquest, for Jews and Muslims alike, are well known.’⁶⁷⁸

Both entities were forcibly removed.

Arnold narrates this story:

‘One of the Spanish Muhammadans who was driven out of his native country in the last expulsion of the Moriscos in 1610, while protesting against the persecutions of the Inquisition, made the following vindication of the toleration of his co-religionists:

“Did our victorious ancestors ever once attempt to extirpate Christianity out of Spain, when it was in their power? Did they not suffer your forefathers to enjoy the free use of their rites at the same time that they wore their chains? Is not the absolute injunction of our Prophet, that whatever nation is conquered by Musalman steel, should, upon the payment of a moderate annual tribute, be permitted to persevere in their own pristine persuasion, how absurd soever, or to embrace what other belief they themselves best approved of? If there may have been some examples of forced conversions they are too rare to deserve mentioning, and only attempted by men who had not the fear of God, and the Prophet, before their eyes, and who, in so doing, have acted directly and diametrically contrary to the holy precepts and ordinances of Islam which cannot, without sacrilege, be violated by any who would be held worthy of the honourable epithet of Musalman . . . You can never produce, among us, any blood-thirsty, formal tribunal, on account of different persuasion in points of faith, that anywise approaches your execrable inquisition. Our arms, it is true, are ever open to receive all who are disposed to embrace our religion; but we are not allowed by our sacred Qur’an to tyrannise over consciences. Our proselytes have all imaginable encouragement, and have no sooner professed God’s Unity

⁶⁷⁸ B. Lewis: *Cultures in Conflict*; (Oxford University Press; 1995); pp 16-7.

and His Apostle's mission but they become one of us, without reserve; taking to wife our daughters, and being employed in posts of trust, honour and profit; we contenting ourselves with only obliging them to wear our habit, and to seem true believers in outward appearance, without ever offering to examine their consciences, provided they do not openly revile or profane our religion: if they do that, we indeed punish them as they deserve; since their conversion was voluntarily, and was not by compulsion."⁶⁷⁹

This very spirit of toleration was made one of the main articles in an account of the "Apostacies and Treasons of the Moriscos," drawn up by the Archbishop of Valencia in 1602 when recommending their expulsion to Philip III, as follows:

'That they commended nothing so much as that liberty of conscience in all matters of religion, which the Turks, and all other Muhammadans, suffer their subjects to enjoy.'⁶⁸⁰

Relying on a number of sources, Arnold⁶⁸¹ adds:

'What deep roots Islam had struck in the hearts of the Spanish people may be judged from the fact that when the last remnant of the Moriscos was expelled from Spain in 1610, these unfortunate people still clung to the faith of their fathers, although for more than a century they had been forced to outwardly conform to the Christian religion, and in spite of the emigrations that had taken place since the fall of Granada, nearly 500,000 are said to have been expelled at that time.'⁶⁸²

Whole towns and villages were deserted and the houses fell into ruins, there being no one to rebuild them.'⁶⁸³ These Moriscos were probably all descendants of the original inhabitants of the country, with little or no admixture of Arab blood; the reasons that may be adduced in support of this statement are too lengthy to be given here; one point only in the evidence may be mentioned, derived from a letter written in 1311, in which it is stated that of the 200,000 Muhammadans then living in the city of Granada, not more than 500 were of Arab descent, all the rest being descendants

⁶⁷⁹ J. Morgan: *Mahometanism Explained*; (London; 1723-5); vol ii; pp. 297-8; p. 345 in T. Arnold: *The Preaching of Islam*; op cit; pp. 145-6.

⁶⁸⁰ J. Morgan; p. 310.

⁶⁸¹ T. Arnold: *The Preaching of Islam*; op cit; pp. 145-6.

⁶⁸² C. H. Lea: *The Moriscos of Spain*; p. 259.

⁶⁸³ J. Morgan: *Mahometanism explained*; op cit; vol ii; p. 337.

of converted Spaniards.⁶⁸⁴ Finally, it is of interest to note that even up to the last days of its power in Spain, Islam won converts to the faith, for the historian, when writing of events that occurred in the year 1499, seven years after the fall of Granada, draws attention to the fact that among the Moors were a few Christians who had lately embraced the faith of the Prophet.⁶⁸⁵

These and other lessons from history demonstrate above all not just Muslim tolerance but true acceptance of the other as an equal. Muslims never upheld or believed in the concept of purity of blood, viewing one race as superior to another. There is no instance of Muslim extermination, or lynching, or abuse of others because of their 'inferior' status. There have never been in Islam supremacist organisations such as the KKK, or National Front parties. Neither did Nazism and Apartheid thrive in Islam. And never have Muslims shown repugnance to the proximity of the Jew or the Black. As Van Ess notes:

'There were no ghettos in the Islamic world, all the way down to modern times. Members of the same religious community often lived in the same quarter for reasons of family solidarity; but they were not kept apart from Muslims deliberately and on principle. In particular, they were not unclean; they could be invited to dinner. On this point, Islam is more broad-minded than Judaism. Christians and Jews were not strangers in the Islamic world..... The possibilities for advancement were great; we meet Christians and Jews holding the post of Vizier. In medieval Egypt the bureaucracy was totally controlled by the Copts; most physicians were likewise Christians or Jews..... In any case, contempt (referring to the sense of superiority the Moslems felt towards others in the Middle Ages) is not as bad as the hatred with which Christians treated Jews in the Middle Ages.'⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid; p. 289.

⁶⁸⁵ Sir William Stirling Maxwell: *Don John of Austria*; (London; 1883); Vol 1; p. 115

⁶⁸⁶ Joseph van Ess: Islamic perspectives; op cit; pp. 104 and 106.

c. The Situation Today:

Today, the same discrepancy exists between Western rhetorical rant about Muslim intolerance contrasting with Western tolerance, and reality, which shows the very opposite. This discrepancy between rhetoric and reality is obvious through a number of instances around us.

In rhetoric, Muslim intolerance is not just preached in the Western media, but most of all, is intellectually expressed, the media having its teacher in academia. A recent (2003) comparison between the tolerance of the West and the intolerance of Islamic societies is given to us by Cox and Marks, who write:

- Modern Western societies are ideally based on the values of tolerance, pluralism and individual freedoms in political, economic, cultural, educational and religious institutions and, most crucially, in the institutions concerned with freedom of expression, communication and access to information. Like their universities, Western societies are relatively decentralised. Although Western societies are not immune from corruption, their institutions and values help to provide complex checks and balances on the exercise of power.
- Traditional Islamic Islamist societies tend to be monolithic and dictatorial, intolerant of dissent, and lacking in individual freedoms. There tends to be more control over all aspects of life - legal, political, economic, cultural, educational, religious - which is frequently exercised in the name of Islam. Freedom of expression and of access to information are often limited and few if any effective checks exist on the exercise of power by the ruling or governing group.
- Two central concepts from traditional Islam - Sharia and Jihad (Islamic holy Law and Islamic Holy War or struggle) - have been revived and extended by modern Islamists in ways which are incompatible with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially with regard to equality before the law and equality between men and women.
- The *shari'a* is derived from the Koran and the *Hadith*. There is no other kind of Islamic law. *Sharia* law requires inequalities between Muslims and: (i) Christians/Jews; (ii)

all other non-Muslims; and also between men and women. Slavery has been endemic in the Muslim world for centuries and still continues in, for example, Sudan today.

- *Jihad* can be interpreted spiritually as a struggle to lead a holy life. But it can be extended to mean an obligation imposed by Allah on all Muslims to strive unceasingly to convert or to subjugate non-Muslims. *Jihad* in this latter sense is without limit of time or space and continues until the whole world accepts Islam or submits to the Islamic state.⁶⁸⁷

And after further comparisons, the two authors, who assert they are speaking in a spirit of understanding, say:

‘Every effort has been made to ensure that these comparisons and analyses, although inevitably oversimplified, are accurate and objective.’⁶⁸⁸

Let’s us compare these words with reality. We take the instances of Sabra and Chatilla, when, in 1982, the Christians massacred over two thousand Palestinians, men, women, children, in the most horrific manner, adding to their previous massacres of Palestinians in the 1970s at Tell Ezaatar, Qarantaine, etc, all in Lebanon. Nowhere in the Muslim world was a Christian harmed for it, the massacres not blamed on Christianity but blamed instead on the extremist Phalanges and their Israeli supporters. The same in Bosnia, where Muslims were mass raped and mass slaughtered by a coalition of Christian armies, yet, neither then, nor today was Christianity blamed, nor did Muslims seek retribution from their Christian neighbours, whether Serbs or Croats, who still live amongst Muslims just as they did before and during the conflict. If we look at Iraq today, 650,000 Iraqis, at least, have been killed by Western bombs and bullets, and state-sponsored death squads and yet Westerners circulate freely not just in the Muslim world, but even in Iraq. Robert Fisk of *The Independent*, in September 2004, says how he wrote back in 1998 asking himself why did the Iraqis not tear any Westerner they come across limb from limb as a reprisal for what the Westerners have done to them since 1991, starving millions of them to death.⁶⁸⁹ Indeed. one only ponders, if a Muslim army invaded a Western country and caused the death of hundreds of thousands of its citizens, what would then be the fate of the Muslims in the West?

⁶⁸⁷ C. Cox-J. Marks: *The West, Islam*; op cit; pp. 78-9.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid; pp. 80.

⁶⁸⁹ R. Fisk: *The Independent*; 11 Sept 04; cover page.

Two instances in very recent years highlight how far Western tolerance extends. In Holland, on 2 November 2004 an anti-Muslim film maker, who cast naked Muslim women covered in verses of the Qur'an, was murdered. Following this murder, hundreds of attacks against Muslims took place in the country in revenge. Tens of mosques, Muslim schools, homes, and shops were set ablaze.

Another instance to show Western 'tolerance' of Muslims is highlighted by extracts from an article by Robert Fisk in June 2006:

'This has been a good week to be in Canada or an awful week, depending on your point of view - to understand just how irretrievably biased and potentially racist the Canadian press has become. For, after the arrest of 17 Canadian Muslims on "terrorism" charges, the Toronto *Globe* and Mail and, to a slightly lesser extent, the *National Post*, have indulged in an orgy of finger pointing that must reduce the chances of any fair trial and, at the same time, sow fear in the hearts of the country's more than 700,000 Muslims. In fact, if I were a Canadian Muslim right now, I'll already be checking the airline time-table for a flight out of town.

First, the charges. Even a lawyer for one of the accused has talked of a plot to storm the parliament in Ottawa, hold MPs hostage and chop off the head of Prime Minister Stephen Harper without challenging the "facts" or casting any doubt on their sources - primarily the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or Canada's leak-dripping Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) - reporters have told their readers that the 17 were variously planning to blow up parliament, CSIS' headquarters, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and sundry other targets. Every veiled and chadored Muslim woman relative of the accused has been photographed and their pictures printed, often on front pages. "Home-grown terrorists" has become theme of the month - even though the "terrorists" have yet to stand trial. They were in receipt of "fertilisers", we were told, which could be turned into explosives. When it emerged that Canadian police officers had already switched the "fertilisers" for a less harmful substance, nobody followed up the implications of this apparent "sting". A Buffalo radio station down in the US even announced that the accused had actually received "explosives". Bingo: guilty before trial. Of course, the Muslim-bashers have laced this nonsense with the usual pious concern for the rights of the

accused. “Before I go on, one disclaimer,” purred the *Globe and Mail*’s Margaret Wenté. “Nothing has been proved and nobody should rush to judgement.” ‘Which, needless to say, Wenté then went on to do in the same paragraph:

“The exposure of our very own home-grown terrorists, if that’s what the men aspired to be, was both predictably shocking and shockingly predictable.”

And just in case we missed the point of this hypocrisy, Wenté ended her column by announcing that “Canada is not exempt from home-grown terrorism”. Angry young men are the tinderbox and Islamism is the match. The country will probably have better luck than most at “putting out the fire”, she adds. But who, I wonder, is really lighting the match?

For a very unpleasant - albeit initially innocuous - phrase has now found its way into the papers. The accused 17 - and, indeed their families and sometimes the country’s entire Muslim community - are now referred to as “Canadian-born”. Well, yes, they are Canadian-born. But there’s a subtle difference between this and being described as a “Canadian” - as other citizens of this vast country are in every other context. And the implications are obvious; there are now two types of Canadian citizen: the Canadian-born variety (Muslims) and Canadians (the rest).⁶⁹⁰

It is needless to add many comments to this article, but its lessons are significant. It bears a striking resemblance with other similar ‘plots’ uncovered in the West. The hysteria that follows any such plots, and the anti-Islamic feelings that are stirred are similar in form and tenor. These ‘plots’ have also helped Western society reach the conclusions that the Muslims are not just a threat, but are also the enemy within. This leaves one to ask the ultimate question: ‘Will the Muslims survive as minorities in ‘tolerant, civilised and humane’ Western society?’

⁶⁹⁰ The Independent; 10 June 06; p. 35.

2. Muslim 'Oppression of Women'

Today, Islam is depicted and perceived as a faith that oppresses women and that is repressive in matters of sexuality. Yet there was a time when Islam was attacked for the exact opposite, and Western Christendom praised itself for the exact opposite, too.

In the Middle Ages, Humbert of Romans, Master-General of the Dominican Order, who had lived in the Holy Land, wrote a pamphlet of advice for Pope Gregory X (Pope 1271-1276), where he says that Islam's picture of Paradise is such that the most bestial man can understand it: full of delights of the flesh. 'The Muslim law,' he continues, 'does not teach great austerity, but encourages lust and the enjoyment of many women.'⁶⁹¹

Gerald of Wales, writing in the 12th century, held that the Prophet's teachings were concentrated on lust, thus particularly suitable for Orientals, since they lived in a climate of great natural heat. One popular tradition attributed to Islam was a plan for general sexual profligacy 'as an instrument for the destruction of Christianity.'⁶⁹²

A medieval attitude, which Southern sums up:

'To Western ideals essentially celibate, sacerdotal, and hierarchical, Islam opposed the outlook of a laity frankly indulgent and sensual.'⁶⁹³

Daniel notes how Islam's appeal was painted by Christian apologists as owing 'to nothing else than to its corruption of souls, offering people sensuous pleasures Christianity would never contemplate to even address. 'Christianity since its early days had stressed the value of total sexual continence in a way that was foreign to Islam.'⁶⁹⁴

A whole mass of Western writing depicting Islam in the same manner lasted until fairly recently. Thus, in the mid nineteenth century, E.A. Freeman, judged 'the West to be progressive, monogamous and Christian,' and the East 'stationary, arbitrary, polygamous and

⁶⁹¹ In D.C. Munro: *The Western attitude toward Islam during the period of the Crusades*; *Speculum* Vol 6 No 4, pp. 329-43; at p. 342.

⁶⁹² R.W. Southern: *Western Views*; op cit; 30.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid*; p. 7.

⁶⁹⁴ N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit; p.230.

Mahometan.’⁶⁹⁵ Which is also the point by his contemporary, J.D. Bate, who served as a missionary in India (between 1865 and 1897), saying that

‘Islam succeeded by corrupting its followers. Men had even converted to Islam,’ according to him to indulge their ‘brutal appetites for sexual pleasure... the great Arabian reformer made permanent provisions for the flesh.’⁶⁹⁶

This is a fallacy, of course, which is noted by Smith, who points out how Islam won the hearts and the minds not because it was a sensuous religion; the fast, daily prayer, almsgiving, Smith notes, ‘Appeal little to lazy, sensual or selfish people. Nothing could be more destitute of truth than to argue that a religion owed ‘its permanent success to bad morality.’⁶⁹⁷

However, to maintain this false image of Islam, as Daniel notes:

‘The Christian canon of Muslim behaviour, that is, the received Christian opinion as to what Muslims actually did, was partly formed by the tendency of misconceptions to snowball, and to confirm as well as to add to one another. Mere repetition is enough to bring unshakable conviction; and once it had been asserted that Islamic teaching was sexually lax, every example of laxity would be noticed from that moment, and, once notified, attributed to the doctrine.’⁶⁹⁸

Indeed, Islamic sexual laxity, just like the alleged Islamic intolerance, barbarism, violence, terror, and other negative depictions of Islam, by being subjects of a daily rant are turned into established truths even when this is contradicted by reality.

It is not just ‘Islamic sexual laxity’ but also ‘Islam’s enslavement and barbaric oppression of women,’ which the West has denounced for centuries to this day. The following looks at this ten centuries-old propaganda, and how, in the Western view, it is Islam the faith, which is responsible for the oppression of women. As with other hostile depictions, once more, we realise that whilst Western rhetoric claims one thing, reality proves the very opposite.

⁶⁹⁵ E.A. Freeman: *The History and Conquests*; op cit; pp. i.4.

⁶⁹⁶ J.D. Bate: *The Claims of Ishmael*; (London; W.H. Allen; 1884); pp. 285; 253.

⁶⁹⁷ R.B. Smith: *Mohammed*; op cit p. 196.

⁶⁹⁸ N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; op cit; p. 270

a. Unremitting Propaganda:

It is needless to go far back in history to follow the Western onslaught on Islam in relation to its 'barbaric' treatment of women. Randomly picked instances of such depictions from recent centuries are enough to highlight this.

The 17th century French traveller, Chardin, insists on the horrors of the seraglio. In one of his stories, he recounts that King Abbas much taken with a concubine, is asked by her to refrain from sex because she is indisposed. Suspicious of her excuse, he has the matter investigated, and finding her to be free from such female inconvenience, he has her burnt alive.⁶⁹⁹

This and similar stories helped keep in currency notions of a cruel and vengeful Eastern male, the mephitic master who vilely abused his women. Galland recounts the story of a mistreated slave girl made desperate by her keeper:

'A slave from Constantinople having been mistreated by many blows with a stick on her feet by her master, entered into a deep despair, that she set fire to the house and hanged herself after that, thus seeking to punish the cruelty of her master, and free herself at the same time.'⁷⁰⁰

18th-century depictions follow the same lines: unlike the 'Eastern beastly male, the Western man treats his woman with care and respect.' In the *Lettres Persannes* Montesquieu emphasizes the essential differences between the East and the West by contrasting stereotypical images of Oriental women with that of Western woman. As he argues in *The Spirit of the Law*, it seems that despotism is related to the servitude of women while the spirit of monarchy promotes the liberty of women:

'In despotic governments women do not introduce, but are themselves an object of luxury. They must be in a state of the most rigorous servitude. Everyone follows the spirit of government, and adopts in his own family the customs he sees everywhere established. As the laws are very severe and executed on the spot, they are afraid lest the liberty of women should expose them to danger... as princes in these countries

⁶⁹⁹ J. Chardin: *Voyage....*; (Amsterdam; 1686); 2 vols; vol ii; p. 279.

⁷⁰⁰ A. Galland: *Journal; 1672-3*; edited by C. Shefer; (Paris; 1868); 2 vols; vol ii; p. 19.

make a sport of human nature, they allow themselves a multitude of women; and a thousand considerations oblige them to keep those Women in close confinement.⁷⁰¹

Answering Lady Montague who had praise for the condition of women in Turkey, Eton insists that Turkish women are deceitful but never free. Although women look for opportunities to become unfaithful to their husbands, and the proposition generally comes from them, it also involves great danger.⁷⁰² Thus, they live a “stupid solitary life” surrounded by slaves or by women as ignorant and spiritless as themselves.⁷⁰³

In a similar vein, Hunter observes, as against Montague’s description, that Turkish women are quite unhappy and live a slave’s life:

‘In a country where plurality of wives is authorized by law, and... the sex must infallibly be tyrannized over and degraded. It is deprived of its natural rights. It is denied its natural protection... It is robbed of its dignity and its honour.. It is compelled to pay obedience to a wretch whom it despises, and whilst it despises to submit to the gratification of his lust.’⁷⁰⁴

On the one hand, polygamy is denounced as a shameless and insulting tyranny, achieved by the powerful and strong over the weak and helpless. On the other hand, polygamy is conceived as suitable for a Turkish man; in fact, it is considered as a very good and necessary maxim for the Turks:

“...Wives, slaves, and concubines, promiscuously granted them without control and every tenet of their faith, and practice of their lives, combining jointly to indulge their wishes in the gross enjoyment of a sensual appetite.”⁷⁰⁵

For Montesquieu, polygamy is a case for the “abuse of slavery”, because slavery should be calculated for utility, not for pleasure.⁷⁰⁶ However, in “Mohammedan states” women are born only to be subservient to the pleasure of others... this servitude is alleviated by the laziness in which such slaves spend their days; which is an additional disadvantage to the state.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰¹ Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws*; 1749; tr by T. Nugent; (New York and London; Hafner Publishing Company; 1966); p. 102.

⁷⁰² W. Eton: *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*; op cit; p. 243. See A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit.

⁷⁰³ W. Eton: *A Survey*; p. 243.

⁷⁰⁴ W. Hunter: *Travels in the Year 1792*; (London; 1796); p. 375-6.

⁷⁰⁵ A. Hill: *A Full and Just Account*; op cit; p. 91.

⁷⁰⁶ Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws*; op cit; p. 242.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

Slavery of women in Turkey is also contrasted with the liberty of European women. This is best illustrated in a play about the character named Maria Cecilia who is portrayed as the daughter of Grand Signor, Ahmet III. She somehow went to Europe and became a Christian. According to Turkish standards she has an outrageous life style: she is educated in Italy, residing in France, in love with a knight of Malta. Sultan Ahmet who is depicted as a particularly effeminate and soft ruler is astonished to see his daughter in Western clothes. He is also appalled by the fact that Maria has a quite improper attitude towards him. Then, he asks: "What god do you serve? ... my daughter must be a Christian"! And Maria declares her independence: "I avow it openly, the respect I owe my God is above my fear of a father."⁷⁰⁸

In the literature of the 19th century Romanticism movement, likewise, the 'barbarism' of the Eastern male is contrasted with the 'civilised' behaviour of the Western male. One tied women up and sold them at slave auctions; the other revered them and placed them on pedestals.⁷⁰⁹ Thus, the French writer, Dumas, writes:

'Woman in our life is a wife, a sister, a friend, in theirs (the Muslims) she is a slave, the most unfortunate of all slaves. Her life is that of a prisoner, none other than her master comes near her. The more attractive she is, the more unhappy, because then her life is suspended on a thread, she raises her veil, and her head falls.'⁷¹⁰

The woman for the fanaticised, brutal Muslim is a prize of war and piracy; the Muslim prowling upon her and ravaging her.⁷¹¹ Helena, heroine of a poem by the Frenchman Alfred de Vigny is violated brutally by the Turks; an act de Vigny dwells upon in every single, morbid detail. As for her women folk, in the *Orientales* of Victor Hugo, another Frenchman, they are all prisoners at the Seraglio, and are offered to the beastly delectation of the Sultan. Of course, all these women are young virgins.⁷¹² The victims of Turkish beastly desires are generally convent girls kidnapped by (Muslim) pirates, and taken to the Harem of the Sultan.⁷¹³

⁷⁰⁸ J. Lavalee: *Maria Cecilia or Life and Adventure of the Daughter of Ahmet III, Emperor of the Turks*; (London; 1788); pp. 209-10.

⁷⁰⁹ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fiction*; op cit; 78-9.

⁷¹⁰ A. Dumas: *Quinze Jours au Sinai* (Plan de La Tour; 1979), p. 7.

⁷¹¹ C. Grossir: *L'Islam des Romantiques*; op cit; p. 99 fwd.

⁷¹² V. Hugo: *Les Orientales*; (1964); Les Tetes du Serail; IV; pp. 602-3.

⁷¹³ Ibid. *Chanson de Pirates*; p. 619.

In the Western view, the Muslim woman, brutalised by her male, looks longingly for her Western liberator. Victor Hugo has an Arab woman voice exactly such sentiments to the departing European:

‘If you don’t come back, ponder a little
Sometimes
About the girls of the Desert, sisters with soft
Voices
Who dance with barren feet on the dune;
O beautiful young white man, beautiful bird
Passing,
Remember, because
O fast stranger,
Your memory will stay with more than one of us.’⁷¹⁴

Pierre Loti’s *Azyadé* describes the native woman’s surrender to a white man - not because he is powerful and she is forced to serve him - but because he has seduced her with his personal charm and holds her in willing captivity. When the story’s hero, an English officer (also) named Loti, is about to depart with his regiment, *Aziyadé* loses all force, falls ill, suffers inconsolable anguish, and after his departure, dies.⁷¹⁵

Kabbani notes how:

‘This romantic dependency that the European liked to cherish was only a sublimated form of Eastern women’s real dependency on Western men. All Easterners were ultimately dependent in the colonial power balance, but women and young boys especially so. Thus they served as the colonial world’s sex symbols, its accommodating objects. Since the Victorian imagination could not conceive of female eroticism divorced from female servitude; since in the core of nineteenth-century sexuality there lurked all the conflicts of power and powerlessness, wealth and poverty, mastery and slavehood, the spectacle of subject women (and boys) could not but be exciting. The Western male could possess the native woman by force of his dominion over her native land; she was subjugated by his wealth, his military might, and his access to machinery. She was his colonial acquisition, but one that he pretended enjoyed his domination and would mourn his departure.’⁷¹⁶

⁷¹⁴ V. Hugo: *Odes et balades*; (Paris; 1829); p. 488.

⁷¹⁵ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; pp. 79-80.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid.

Similar themes are found expressed in contemporary Western paintings. Generally, they depict scenes from a supposed Muslim slave market, where naked women are exhibited and sold. Kabbani looks at a number of such paintings.⁷¹⁷ John Faed's 'Bedouin exchanging a slave for armour', dating from 1857 shows the Bedouin with an almost entirely naked slave-girl exhibited in the stall of a sword merchant. The girl's body is inspected in such a meticulous, very searching manner, her worth assessed in armour. Her expression, Kabbani notes, 'is a piteous one, ... completely helpless; naked, bound, female, and a slave.' The oriental man is predatory, lecherous, gross, and loathsome. Another famous slave-market scene is Gérôme's 'Le Marché d'Esclaves,' where the slave girl is in the midst of would-be purchaser men. The girl, again, is naked, offered to the gaze of her captors and would-be buyers. The Muslim owner, holding her head veil is 'a ghoulis-looking man,' just as Muslims are always depicted: frightening with their gross, dark complexions, their hairy faces, big, bulging eyes, thickened lips... Four other victims await their turns for inspection, still huddled in their veils.⁷¹⁸ In every scene, the delicate features of the woman contrast with the beastly, monstrous appearances of her Muslim male captors and traders.

Kabbani points out how:

'Oriental males, as noted already, are almost always portrayed as predatory figures in Orientalist paintings. They are mostly as ugly or loathsome, in contrast to the women who are beautiful and voluptuous. This leaves the woman free for the abduction of the viewer's gaze since she is not attached within the painting, being mismatched with a male who is her obvious inferior. Thus, she must desire to be saved from her fate in some way. By such projection, the European fantasised about the Eastern woman's emotional dependency on him. This appealed to his sense of himself as romantic hero.'⁷¹⁹

The scenes Western painters sought to create in these paintings contrast sharply with reality, though. Firstly, it is impossible to find one single instance of a half-naked female body exhibited in public, let alone women sold naked in markets, in any part of Islamic society from the early times of Islam to our day. Secondly, no faith, in fact,

⁷¹⁷ Ibid; pp. 78-9.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid; pp. 79-80.

covers the human body as much as Islam does. This, incredibly enough, is today's main criticism of Islam - its covering of the female body. This, again, proves how the faith of Islam, accused at one point for one thing (uncovering the female body), is today accused of its complete opposite (covering it).

The major aim behind such fallacious representations is to enhance the perception of Muslim society as barbaric contrasting with the humane, civilized Western society. Kabbani rightly observes how:

'Their (oriental men's) villainy is compounded by the fact that they are portrayed as traders in female bodies. They are the cruel captors who hold women in their avaricious grasp, who use them as chattels, as trading-goods, with little reverence for them as human beings. This idea was highly important in distinguishing between the barbarity of the Eastern male and the civilised behaviour of the Western male. One tied women up and sold them at slave auctions; the other revered them and placed them on pedestals. The European cherished the notion of his gentlemanliness among savages. It was one added way of convincing himself that he was born to rule over them.'⁷²⁰

Precisely, indeed: by his superior standards, the Westerner has the moral duty to humanise Muslim society towards women, and so justify his military presence in the Muslim world.

b. The 'Islamic Source of Barbarism and Western Colonial Enlightenment':

Throughout history, Western military involvement in the Muslim world (just as anywhere else, for that matter) has always taken place as 'a magnanimous deed,' aimed 'to serve and civilize the society being invaded.' It hardly matters that such involvements always led to slaying Muslims in their millions and pushing their societies decades (if not centuries) back, the same claims, the same deeds, and the same outcomes, have always, without one single exception, repeated themselves. Hence, 19th century and subsequent Western colonial thrusts into the Muslim world, and the accompanying Christian

⁷²⁰ Ibid; pp. 76-7.

mission, were conducted in an effort to bring about changes to Muslim society, including doing away with its 'barbaric treatment of women.' Amongst the countless accounts which express this 'salutary work' is the following article from the leading missionary organ *The Moslem World*, which speaks of 'the good work' done by France in defeating Islam in Algeria, and in the same process liberating its women from its shackles. J.T.C. Blackmore (from Fort National, Algeria), in his article: 'France: A Disintegrator of Islam', writes:

'Recently a French friend of some years standing, now risen to an important official position, said to me: 'I want to tell you now that I am coming to see more and more that the French cannot advance very far in North Africa unless we overthrow the Moslem religion.'

This growing antagonism to Islam in official quarters does not come from a spirit of religious fanaticism, but because of the hindrance Islam is found to be in the social and economic development of the country.

To my friend's declaration I replied:

'And I want to tell you that actually France is one of the forces that is contributing the most to the undermining of Islam.' His pleased smile confirmed to me his desire to see the country rid of Mohammedanism, but he said:

'I don't see that. On the contrary we are stupidly and constantly Islamising the Berbers.' He then enumerated a few things in support of his statement, e.g. the native students entering the normal college for school teachers in Algiers when registering, after the question, "What religion?" are obliged to put down, 'Islam'. Only with great difficulty recently have Christian converts been able to avoid this.

'Yes I said, 'officially and intentionally a brave attempt is still being made to fulfil the old promise not to disturb the religion and customs of the country, but unconsciously France is working powerfully and surely to the disintegration of Islam....'

Then, the author (Blackmore) goes on to describe the trial of a Kabyle who beat up his wife, and how he appealed against the tribunal that decided in favour of his wife. His appeal was rejected, and the following is an extract of the decision:

'Whereas it appears from the previous decisions of judges and from diverse documents that numerous protestations have already been made against the barbarous custom which forbids the Kabyle woman, brutalised by her husband, to ask for the

rupture of the conjugal tie, that a new and more humane conception of woman's rights has at last seen the day in Kabylia, and the evolution of this idea has reached a sufficiently advanced stage to constitute a new custom, which has taken the place of the old one, and that the moment has arrived for the courts to recognise and adopt it - the appeal, whilst allowable as to its form as to its purport, is rejected.'

Mankind throughout Kabylia are beginning to tingle with indignation. Womankind are beginning to laugh discreetly. But the law goes on in its might.

Thus, France gently but surely is overthrowing Islam.'⁷²¹

'The great improvements Christian colonisation brought to the condition of women in the Islamic world' is also noted by Stoddard. He writes:

'The importance of Western education in the East is nowhere better illustrated than in the effects it is producing in ameliorating the status of women.... As an English writer well puts it: 'Ladies first,' we say in the West; in the East it is 'ladies last.' That sums up succinctly the difference in the domestic ideas of the two civilizations.'

Under these circumstances it might seem as though no breath of the West could yet have reached these jealously secluded creatures. Yet, as a matter of fact, Western influences have already profoundly affected the women of the upper classes, and female education, while far behind that of the males has attained considerable proportions. In the more advanced parts of the Orient like Constantinople, Cairo and the cities of India, distinctly modern types of women have appeared, the self supporting, self-respecting and respected woman school-teacher being especially in evidence.

The social consequences of this rising status of women, not only to women themselves but also to the community at large, are very important. In the East the harem is, as Vambéry well says, the "bulwark of obscurantism."⁷²² Ignorant and fanatical herself, the harem woman implants her ignorance and fanaticism in her sons as well as in her daughters. What could be a worse handicap for the Eastern intellectual than his boyhood years spent 'behind the veil?' No wonder that

⁷²¹ J.T.C. Blackmore: France: A Disintegrator of Islam; in *The Moslem World*; Vol 14; 1924; pp. 136-9.

⁷²² Vambéry: La Turquie d'aujourd'hui et d'avant Quarante ans; p. 32.

enlightened Oriental fathers have been in the habit of sending their boys to school at the earliest possible age in order to get them as soon as possible out of the stultifying atmosphere of harem life. Yet even this has proved, merely a palliative. Childhood impressions are ever the most lasting, and so long as one-half of the Orient remained untouched by progressive influences, Oriental progress had to be begun again *do novo* with every succeeding generation. The increasing number of enlightened Oriental women is remedying this fatal defect. As a Western writer says:

“Give the mothers education and the whole situation is transformed. Girls who are learning other things than the unintelligible phrases of the Koran are certain to impart such knowledge, as daughters, sisters, and mothers, to their respective households. Women who learn housewifery, methods of modern cooking, sewing, and sanitation in the domestic economy schools, are bound to cast about the home upon their return the atmosphere of a civilised community. The old time picture of the Oriental woman spending her hours upon divans, eating sweetmeats, and indulging in petty and degrading gossip with the servants or with the women as ignorant as herself, will be changed. The new woman will be the companion rather than a slave or a toy of her husband. Marriage will be advanced from a stage of a paltry trade of bodies to something like a real union, involving respect towards the woman by both sons and fathers, while in a new pride of relationship the woman herself will be discovered.”⁷²³

According to Western views, one of the great challenges faced by Western colonisation was the ‘incurable Muslim trade of bodies,’ i.e. the slave trade. A dominant reason why this trade has endured in Islamic countries, we are told, is because Muslim men buy women for their sexual gratifications. Here are extracts from one of the many recent academic books telling us about the plight of women at the hands of Muslim men, who, in order to indulge their sexual appetite, have enslaved them. The author, Gordon, writes:

‘Even in the slave states of the antebellum American South, where relations between the races were governed by strict codes of behaviour, often stiffened by anti-miscegenation or anti-cohabitation laws, it was not uncommon for slave owners

⁷²³ L. Stoddard: *The New World of Islam*; op cit; pp. 258-9.

to keep one or more slave girls as mistresses, although rarely as wives. However, this aspect of slavery was incidental to the real purpose of slavery, which was to provide, at an economic price, black slaves to work the cotton fields which were the economic backbone of the South. In this order of things, male slaves, who became the main toilers in the fields, generally commanded a higher price than women slaves of comparable age and health. In contrast, what distinguished the domestic trade in Africa and the export to the Muslim world of young female slaves was the degree to which acquiring concubines was a compelling and conscious motive.⁷²⁴

Acquiring one or more concubines was an irresistible attraction to men that pervaded all social ranks of Muslim society. After being brought into her master's household, the concubine performed routine domestic chores; it was not uncommon for talented slave women to receive instruction in art, poetry, or singing and then to spend much of their time performing for the benefit of their owners. Notwithstanding the various roles they assumed, the primary purpose of most men in acquiring a concubine was sexual. The concubine offered men a religiously approved way of gratifying their sexual desires and fantasies in ways that were often not possible in normal marital life.

In Islamic society, a man could have no contact at all with his intended wife until the consummation of their marriage. Koranic law, for reasons having to do with female modesty and chastity, forbids women to be in the company of any men, except their husbands or persons so closely related to them as to come within prohibited degrees for marriage. Included in this category were close relatives, slaves, particularly eunuchs, and children too young to be aware of differences of sex. A woman unlike her husband, who could avoid the constrictive embrace of a sexually frustrating marriage by taking as many as four wives at any one time and buying as many concubines as he wished, had no such options. She had to live a monogamic life under conditions that placed severe limits on her physical movements in a society which restricted her meeting other men.

⁷²⁴ A.G.B. Fisher and H.J. Fisher: *Slavery and Muslim Society in Africa*; (London; C. Hurst and Company; 1970); p. 99.

Such restrictive courting practices, which few women dared flout, were bound to create, in time, serious strains in marital ties. Personal problems arising from differences in temperament or sexual incompatibility were scarcely avoidable for men and women who were almost strangers to one another upon marriage. The unhappy or sexually frustrated women, rarely a matter of concern to the male-dominant society whose mores she had to follow, had to resign herself to remaining faithful to an uncaring or insensitive husband or to seeking a lover. Adultery, however, when committed by a woman, remained an unpardonable act in Muslim society; under Islamic law it is punishable by death. Such a rule was applied, *a fortiori*, to a woman who owned male slaves as well. While a woman could own slaves in her own right, she was not permitted to have sexual relations with any of them - a restriction that did not apply to her husband. A man who discovered that his wife shared her bed with a slave could have her pay for such a transgression with her life....⁷²⁵

Gordon then adds:

‘The availability of concubines, moreover, offered a man a measure of relief from the unhappiness of marriage that was sexually un-gratifying. Before purchasing a slave whom he intended to use as a concubine, a man was careful to make sure that she was responsive to his amorous advances. This could be managed in the privacy of special stalls that were set aside in slave markets for the close examination of female slaves by prospective buyers, here men would take liberties with these hapless girls in a manner they would not dream of when courting a woman they wished to marry. In Cairo, despite laws regulating the proper and moral conduct of public affairs, including slave market practices, these regulations were often flouted by interested customers of female slaves. This opportunity to choose a concubine after first approaching her in an intimate manner offered for a man a far more promising way of developing a sexually gratifying relationship than with a wife.’⁷²⁶

And Gordon concludes:

‘The merger of this form of slavery into the structure of family life helped make slavery into a formidable institution in the

⁷²⁵ M. Gordon: *Slavery in the Arab World*; originally published in Fr: *L'Esclavage dans le Monde Arabe*; (New Amsterdam; New York; 1989); pp. 84-5.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid*; p. 86.

Islamic world and says much about why it became so difficult to do away with it.⁷²⁷

Gordon is part of this new breed of Western academics, who for decades now have invented and reinvented the reality of the Muslim world, have given it intellectual legitimacy, and spread it amongst the learning public. Of course, like his peers, he propounds fallacies in order to serve ideological aims. The situations he describes are the most absurd of all, lurid stories, at best isolated cases, which he picks up to make them a rule of Muslim marital life. Where he finds evidence for his assertion that the Muslims have permitted and indulged in the slave trade so as to satisfy their sexual lust, and even sexual perversions, is a mystery. His attitude expresses the major difference that generally exists between Muslim and Western writers: never would a Muslim writer make similar sweeping, derogatory generalisations about Western marital life, whatever the deficiencies of such married life, from the lurid stories one picks up about it daily.

c. ‘The Woes of Muslim Women Today’:

Obviously, colonisation and mission have failed to ‘liberate Muslim women,’ and so the same depictions of ‘Muslim barbaric treatment of women’ contrasting with Western humanity is found today. It is needless to reproduce the intense media barrage on the cruel Islamic oppression and shackling of womanhood, just as it is needless to linger on the tragic-comical situation whereby murderous dictatorships in the Muslim world become welcomed in the world of ‘the free and the good’ as soon as skimpily dressed women fill the screens of their television channels alongside porn. All that suffices here in order to capture the overall Western view of women under Islam today is the following set of depictions from a number of sources summed up by Lueg:

‘There is little variation in the image of the Islamic woman offered by the media: she serves man and is oppressed by him, be it (based on past ideas about harems or polygamy) as one among many other wives, or as the cleaning lady in the West who must always walk three steps behind her husband, or even

⁷²⁷ Ibid; p. 91.

as the woman who lives the spoilt 'life of luxury' in the Arab ruling houses so beloved by the tabloids - she remains passive and dependent. From the gossip column to the feminist magazine, Islamic women are mainly this: victims. As such, they are merely objects of reporting, never allowed to speak for themselves. Women from Islamic countries are sometimes even perceived as a threat because they are victims. They are seen as emigrating to the West from their homelands *en masse*. One Western official, who requested anonymity, put it this way:

'Consider that there are one billion Muslims in the world, so we're talking hypothetically about 500 million women who might want out.'⁷²⁸

Under the title 'A Stick in the Back, a Child in the Belly' *Der Spiegel* describes the 'quiet and hidden martyrdom' of Turkish women in Germany, 'whose billowing robes and old-maid scarves' have made them a laughing-stock.⁷²⁹ 'They are terrorised and beaten, and live in constant fear of their violent husbands, brothers or male relatives who have total power over everyone in the family who wears a dress.'⁷³⁰

'Women's refugees in Germany', writes *Der Spiegel*, 'are full of Turkish women.' Instead of Turkish women themselves, it is a sociologist from Frankfurt, 'Mrs Konig, expert on the Turks', who tells us all about the conditions in Turkish families. The title of a special issue of the feminist magazine *EMMA-WOR* (The Effects of Male Madness and how Women Offer Resistance) is adorned by the picture of a Muslim woman veiled in black from head to toe, with a blood red crown of thorns placed on her head by a photo montage, the symbol of Jesus, who, according to Christian tradition, sacrificed himself on the cross.⁷³¹

Betty Mahmood's best-seller *Not Without My Daughter* drew in its wake a wave of publications on the life of women in Islamic countries or married to Muslims.⁷³² The more dramatic and brutal the story the better. The women allowed to give their accounts in these publications

⁷²⁸ A. L. Bardach: Tearing off the veil, *Vanity Fair*, (August 1993).

⁷²⁹ *Der Spiegel*: No 44; 1990; p. 99.

⁷³⁰ *Der Spiegel*: No 44; 1990; p. 99.

⁷³¹ A. Lueg: The Perception of Islam; op cit; p. 18.

⁷³² A.K. Reulecke: Die Befreiung aus dem Serail,' *Feministische Studien*; 9 Jargang 2, November 1991; pp. 8-20;

Betty Mahmoody: *Not Without my Daughter*, (New York; St Martin's Press; 1993).

had to be 'Prisoners in their own country', 'Sold into slavery by their own fathers' or 'Sentenced to death by their own families'.⁷³³

The veil is deemed the symbol par excellence of Islamic oppression of women. As Lueg notes, the harem, the veil and the Turkish cleaning lady with a headscarf are the clichéd images that the West associates with women and Islam. Oriental women appear mostly shrouded in threatening black yards of material: the chador.⁷³⁴ 'The Headscarf Affair' soon becomes 'a chador war' in the French media.⁷³⁵ Since the end of the nineteenth century, the veiling of women has been seen in the West as a symbol of the backwardness of the Islamic countries. Veiling - to Western eyes, the most visible marker of the differentness and inferiority of Islamic societies - has become a symbol now of both the oppression of women ... and the backwardness of Islam, and the open target of colonial attack and the spearhead of the assault on Muslim societies.⁷³⁶

The assault on the veil (hijab/head scarf) continues today. We have a succinct idea of this from the back cover of a book, which captures the horrors that the veil represents.⁷³⁷ We read:

'What do they want, these young veiled women? Who are they? What do other pupils feel? What do teachers confide when facing these daily difficulties? And what role do parents and the environment play?

Having herself experienced a clash with a veiled high school girl, Elizabeth Altschull, professor of history and geography, has gone to meet her colleagues and students in colleges and high schools of 'the veil.' Unease is growing amongst teachers; some establishments are turning into ghettos. The rejection of classes (natural sciences, music, philosophy, sport...) and the growing radicalisation of the boys under Islamic influence are the corollaries, often unsuspected, of the veil.

In places, imams, or Islamic associations for the support of education are on the attack. In the face of a minority seeking to

⁷³³ A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; p. 18.

⁷³⁴ Ibid; p. 17.

⁷³⁵ 'Mit Kopftuch in die Schule,' *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 7 December 1992.

⁷³⁶ L. Ahmed: *Women and Gender in Islam*; (New Haven; Yale University Press; 1993); p. 152.

⁷³⁷ Elizabeth Altschull: *Le Voile Contre l'Ecole (The Veil Vs Education)* (Le Seuil; Paris; 1995).

impose on schools a fundamentalist Islam, are young Muslim girls, victims of arranged marriages, or in distress, witnesses of the oppressive and unequal character of the veil.

In the name of respect for communities, has not the political and intellectual world abandoned the School of the Republic and its fundamental values?

Relying on many witness accounts, the author calls for a vigorous and robust support to a school that is universal and inclusive.⁷³⁸

d. Once More, the Contradiction Between Rhetoric and Reality:

Whilst all Western elites, media, academia, politics, culture and arts, past and present, have contrasted Western humane treatment of women with the barbaric Islamic treatment of them, in truth, again, looking at reality, past and present, it is actually the reverse that we can find.

Beginning with the issue of the veil (hijab/head scarf), from the title of the book: *Le Voile contre l'Ecole*, (the Veil as the Enemy of Education), the veil is depicted as an attire that hinders Muslim women's social progress, and even deprives them of education. Which is remarkably odd, for veiled Muslim women do not just attend colleges and universities in considerable numbers, but also exert functions of surgeons, journalists, high officers in the administration, ministers, and can own and operate businesses, and so on and so forth. It is also odd to find that it is precisely the 'liberating, progressive' forces who deem the veil a symbol of persecution, who took the step to ban veiled girls from schooling in France, in 2004-5.

Also, as Lueg comments:

'To clarify the issue: the forced veiling of women by men in order to uphold patriarchal structures cannot be justified or accepted. Western women find it almost inconceivable that any woman would voluntarily live according to Islamic dress codes. Yet many women in Islamic countries explain that for

⁷³⁸ Back cover of E. Altschull: *Le Voile*.

them the veil is a symbol of respect for women, allowing them to go about in public more or less without being bothered or degraded as an object. It is also a symbol of their own culture and could therefore come to symbolise resistance to an imposed Westernisation. There are Arab feminists 'who both reject the veil as a personal choice but also recognize its empowering and seductive effect on Arab women'.⁷³⁹ One can argue about these points, but we should be aware of them and not succumb to the veil ourselves by being unable to see independent and thinking individuals behind it.⁷⁴⁰

The generally, and generalized, deficient Western approach to the status of Muslim women is summed up by Kabbani, who writes:

'One of the reasons I wrote this book was to disprove the commonly held and oppressive assumption that Western culture is superior to other cultures; that it is somehow more humane, civilised or tolerant, less violent and less misogynistic. Such assumptions formed the bedrock of nineteenth-century imperialist thought, and provided the intellectual justification for colonizing other peoples' societies. But imperial ideas did not perish with empire. They serve as much of a manipulative political function today as they did a hundred years ago. In the decade that has elapsed since the book was written, I have observed nineteenth-century ideas about the superiority of the West's treatment of its women superimposed on the heated debate about the nature of Islam and its treatment of women. Islam, at the end of the twentieth century, has been made into the religion the West loves to hate; a seething cauldron of sexism, and a dumping ground for all blame.

In the nineteenth-century, the colonial view was that Islam should be thrown off by Muslims so that they would become easier to rule. Muslim women in particular were the focus of this call. Lord Cromer, British Viceroy of Egypt, a lifelong hater of female suffrage in Britain, nevertheless championed emancipation for Egyptian women. In seeking to 'liberate' Muslim women from their religious culture, he was hoping to

⁷³⁹ Lama Abu Odeh: Post Colonial Feminism and the Veil; *Feminist Review*; No 43; 1993; p. 26. A. Lueg: The Perception of Islam; op cit; p. 20.

⁷⁴⁰ A. Lueg: The Perception of Islam; op cit; p. 17.

break the back of the anti-colonial resistance, which had strong religious overtones.

Today, the imperial torch has been passed to a new group of Orientalists, a great many of them American feminists. It has become intellectually fashionable for American women-writers - with little or no experience of the Muslim world, with no knowledge of Muslim history - to spew forth, in books and articles, on the 'pathetic' state of women under Islam. What is worrying about this growing literature, which is always popular with a Western readership that can never get enough about the 'horrors' of Islam, is that it re-establishes the old racial stereotypes at a time when it is quite disastrous to do so, given an already taut situation between the Muslim world and the West.

This literature also builds on some very dubious foundations: That Western women have it all, and Muslim women have nothing; that, for Muslim women to earn status and respect from Western feminism, they must denature themselves by throwing off their religious culture in its entirety. These assumptions are real traps for feminism, as they pander to patriarchy, and assure Western men that they are superior in the way they have managed things. They also reek of a paternalism that is as infuriating as it is blinkered.'

(Then Kabbani relates a very interesting personal experience, where the Western 'expert' on Muslim women only contributed by her writing to distort the picture further):

'When the article appeared it was one more unrelieved catalogue of horrors about Islam. It was illustrated with a huge blow-up photograph of ghostlike women, veiled from head to foot. It ignored any of the important debates within Islam about the rights of women....

But the whole Western debate about Muslim women is a dishonest one.... The study of the Muslim world by the West has never been a neutral and scholarly exercise.'⁷⁴¹

Lueg, likewise, sums up the deficiencies of the Western approach, which is also noted by a few other Western voices:

'As I see it, it is often the Western point of view and not so much Islam that ascribes the role of victim to women in

⁷⁴¹ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fiction*; op cit; pp. ix-x.

Islamic countries', says Martina Sabra.⁷⁴² Indeed while travelling through Islamic countries one does come across many women who simply do not play the role of victim, and who do not see themselves in this light at all. Clearly, the cliché of the oppressed Islamic woman serves the purpose of distracting us from things that are wrong in our own society. These defects appear more acceptable if someone else's experience is even worse. As far as Islam as the 'enemy' is concerned, the problem of women's oppression can be pushed far aside, on to other equally 'Islamic countries', which differ from our 'secular states'. Such a point of view allows us to look down on the Islamic countries and reassure ourselves about our own superiority. 'In the mass media, the stylisation of the "oppressed woman behind the veil" (functions) as a symbol of the "medieval backwardness" of Islamic states, and provides fodder for the outlined discourse on the superiority of the West', writes Anne Kathrin Reulecke.⁷⁴³

'Moreover,' Lueg insists, 'Islamic women should speak for themselves, and we should accept them as individuals. We will not be doing the situation justice as long as we continue to take cover behind the cliché of the Islamic woman as victim. We must analyse discrimination against women by taking into account the real social conditions, as we do for women in the West, instead of assuming we 'know' in advance that this is due to mainly religious reasons. A more equal dialogue could be achieved in this way.'⁷⁴⁴

There is no better way to highlight the contradiction that exists between Western rhetoric which rants about the Muslim barbaric treatment of women, and reality itself, which shows the true barbaric treatment of women in the West. One is not referring here to the past burning of millions of women as witches in the Christian West.⁷⁴⁵ Recently, a piece of news on the BBC reported that a club to train American women to use fire arms was opened in Oregon. The aim was to teach women to shoot their male partners when the latter

⁷⁴² M. Sabra: Frauenrecht-Menschenrecht, *Blätter des iz3w*, No 172; March-April 1991; pp. 26-9.

⁷⁴³ A.K. Reulecke: Die Befreiung; op cit.

⁷⁴⁴ A. Lueg: The Perception of Islam; op cit; p. 20.

⁷⁴⁵ A. Dworkin: *Woman Hating*; (New York; 1974); p. 130.

attacked them. The reason: 3,000 American women are killed every year by their husbands or partners.⁷⁴⁶

Moreover, as Kabbani points out, the 'noble' sentiments for Muslim women are generally the outcome of emotional/physical perversions.⁷⁴⁷ One of Burton's group of associates, Milnes, had a very active interest in flagellation, and had written a poem on the subject, for which Burton suggested the title 'The Birchiad'.⁷⁴⁸ Burton, of course, is famed for his translation of the *One Thousand and One Nights*, and also his *Personal Narrative of Pilgrimage to al-Maddinah and Meccah*.⁷⁴⁹ Both he and Milnes were fascinated by sexual deviancy, which cemented their friendship considerably. In Milnes' library was the work of Hankey (another member of the group), whose books were extremely outrageous; and who also had a passion for collecting instruments of torture as well as pornographic books and objects. Hankey watched the execution of a woman murderer whilst being sexually attended to by prostitutes; all peculiarities highly appreciated by Burton.⁷⁵⁰ Kabbani notes that this very Burton, who expressed deep contempt for Egyptians, Persians, Turks and Arabs, was telling of sexual mutilation abroad, whilst his own compatriots were mutilating women via clitoridictimies and ovary removal.⁷⁵¹ Burton is also the translator of *The Perfumed Garden* of Shaykh Nefzawi, a work he regretted had left out explicit scenes of sodomy and homosexuality.⁷⁵²

And this hardly differs from what we have today. From the French National Front leader Le Pen, to Berlusconi with his television channels abounding with skimpily-dressed women, or the adulterers of every sort, and other sex deviants, and the media, with its nudity and porn, and academia, which, with few exceptions, champions lies and distortions, all, in equal tenor, rise to the high, noble ground, denouncing Islam for its barbaric treatment of women, acting as the self-appointed spokesmen for Muslim women.

⁷⁴⁶ BBC 1 News: 10 p.m. 15 May 02.

⁷⁴⁷ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; pp 55-61.

⁷⁴⁸ In a letter of 26 April 1862.

⁷⁴⁹ London, 1855-6.

⁷⁵⁰ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fiction*; op cit; p. 61.

⁷⁵¹ See Dr E.W. Cushing quoted in B. Ehrenreich and D. English: *Complaints and Disorders*; (London; 1974); p. 35.

⁷⁵² Nafzawi Chaikh: Trans and ed: R.F. Burton: *The Perfumed Gardens*; (London; 1886).

The crucial fact is, whilst it is a challenge, indeed, for anyone to present cases of mass rape or mass slaughter of women, or burning them as witches, by Muslims, one finds Western reality, past and present, full of the cruellest treatment of women, from early times to this very day. The briefest of outlines shows this. During the crusades, for instance, the sight of Christians eating rotten Muslim corpses was seen by the Muslims as particular evidence of Christian depravity,⁷⁵³ but it was mass rape of Muslim women by the crusaders, which literally shattered that most sacred pillar of Islamic society, the sanctity of womenfolk.⁷⁵⁴ Such outrages prompted one Christian chronicler to make the following statement about 'proper' behaviour by a crusader:

'In regard to the women found in the tents of the foe the Franks did them no evil but drove lances into their bellies.'⁷⁵⁵

Mass rape of Muslim women by Christian armies was generalised, whether east or west; In Barbastro (Spain), in 1064, after the capture of the town, Christian accounts describe rapes as taking place in the mosques, or in front of fathers, brothers, and husbands.⁷⁵⁶

During the so-called Western Renaissance (15th-17th centuries), millions of women were burnt alive for their 'heresies or witchcraft'.⁷⁵⁷

One can cite briefly, at random, how in the 16th century, Jean Bodin, prosecutor for the King of France, and Nicolas Remy, judge and general prosecutor of Lorraine, both wrote on demons, the latter sending to the stake, as a judge, about three thousand sorcerers and sorceresses.⁷⁵⁸

Between 1590 and 1597, 1,500 women were executed for witchcraft in Scotland alone.⁷⁵⁹ By the 17th century, the number of trials for witchcraft increased to mad proportions.⁷⁶⁰ There was hardly any region in France, where famous trials cannot be evoked, whether Loundun, Louviers, Nancy, in Normandy etc.⁷⁶¹ and it was the same in most parts of the continent, with the mass exterminations of 'witches' that resulted from such trials.

⁷⁵³ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; (J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd; London, 1983); p.64

⁷⁵⁴ C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades, Islamic Perspectives*, op cit; p.298.

⁷⁵⁵ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; op cit; p.170.

⁷⁵⁶ N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit; p.83.

⁷⁵⁷ A. Dworkin: *Woman Hating*; op cit; p. 130.

⁷⁵⁸ Regine Pernoud: *Pour en finir avec le Moyen Age*: (Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1977); p. 103.

⁷⁵⁹ Channel Four; 9-10 Pm; 30 January 03.

⁷⁶⁰ R Pernoud: *Pour en finir*; op cit; p.103.

⁷⁶¹ For a summary on this see: Jean Palou: *La Sorcellerie*, Edition Que sais je?, no 756, Sed, 1975, notably.

From 1603 to the end of the century, 3192 individuals were condemned and executed in Great Britain alone under the accusation of witchcraft, sorcery or conjuration.⁷⁶²

Shrieking Scotch Covenanters were submitted to torture by crushing their knees flat; women were tied to stakes on the sea sands and drowned by the slowly advancing tide because they would not attend Episcopal worship, or branded on their cheeks and then shipped to America.⁷⁶³

Looking at the present day, whilst Islam is blamed by Western rhetoric for its cruelty to women, we see, instead, Muslim women slaughtered or raped en masse, from Chechnya,⁷⁶⁴ to Kosovo;⁷⁶⁵ to the 200,000 or so women raped in Bosnia,⁷⁶⁶ all deeds happening at the hands of modernist forces fighting Islamic 'terror' and fanaticism, and all, without one single exception, pro-women liberators.⁷⁶⁷ And whilst Muslim women were being raped in their tens of thousands in Bosnia, and raped, tortured and murdered in despotic 'Muslim' states backed by the West,⁷⁶⁸ not a single Westerner who denounces the horrors of the veil and similar 'Muslim mistreatments of women,' raised, or raises his finger in their defence.

⁷⁶² J. Davenport: *An Apology*; op cit; p. 112.

⁷⁶³ J. Draper: *History*; op cit; Vol II; p.17.

⁷⁶⁴ On their serial rape by Russian forces, see *The Observer* 7 April 2002.

⁷⁶⁵ Slaughter and rape of Muslim women, see media and the Hague Trial Reports 1999-2002.

⁷⁶⁶ Read accounts by Maggie O'Kane: *The Guardian*: August 1992-January 1995.

⁷⁶⁷ See all the references just given, and the rest of the media, even anti Islamic one.

⁷⁶⁸ See recurrent reports by international agencies and organisations, as well as in *The Independent* and *The Guardian*, 1992-2006.

Five

CAPTIVES, SLAVES, AND RACISTS

For centuries, once more, according to the established Western view, the Muslims were cruel captors of Christians, pitiless slave traders, and vindictive racists, the whole concept of Islam, in fact, said to be based on the persecution of others, and relying on slavery. The few voices amongst Western Christians such as Sir Geoffrey Fisher, a British Ambassador in Algiers, who denounced the myths of Muslim piracy and cruel treatment of Christian captives, or Davenport and Smith who denounced the myths of Muslim slave trading, were censored and ferociously rebuked. The image that has endured of Muslims is their cruelty on land and sea, to Christians and Black people alike. This image, as to be seen in the final chapter of this work, added to other negative depictions of Islam and Muslims, justified Western colonisation of the Muslim world. Colonisation, indeed, aimed ‘at ending Muslim piracy and cruel treatment of Christians, and putting an end to Muslim slave trading of Africans, besides, of course, civilising Muslim society’.

How this image of Muslim cruelty to captives, slave trading and racism has been constructed by Western rhetoric, and its fallacious foundations, are looked at in this chapter.

1. The Muslim as the 'Cruel Captor of Christians'

Throughout the centuries, the Muslims have been depicted as vile captors inflicting terrible cruelties on Christians. The era of the Muslim Barbary corsairs (17th-18th centuries), with its large number of Western Christian captives, coincides with the intensification of such depictions.

Since the 17th century, and to our day, the image that has endured is of Turks and their 'Barbary Coast allies' (Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) inflicting terror and cruelties on Christians. Postel holds that Christians in North Africa suffered 'an infinity of martyrdoms' and the seamen thought Algiers 'that Citie fatall to all Christians and the butchery of all mankind'.⁷⁶⁹

The Mediterranean became the setting for many stories about Islamic power at sea and in the commercial ports controlled by the Ottomans. Printed accounts of Turkish or Barbary galleys attacking Christian merchants present and confirm the Western stereotypes that associate Islam with acts of violence, treachery, cruelty, and wrath.⁷⁷⁰ This myth easily found its way into 17th-century popular culture⁷⁷¹ and grew rapidly as stories of Christian sufferings reached various parts of the Western world. A newsletter of 1640 speaks of 3000 English in

'Miserable captivity, undergoing insufferable labour, such as rowing in galleys, drawing carts, grinding in mills, with diverse such un-Christian like work most lamentable to express, and most burdensome to undergo, withal suffering much hunger and many blows on their bare bodies, by which cruelty many, not being able to undergo it, have been forced to turn Mahomedan.'⁷⁷²

In literature and legend, Islamic 'Saracens, Turks and Moors' frequently appear as ranting, irrational, fanatical killers who practice treachery, oath-breaking, double-dealing, enslavement, piracy, and

⁷⁶⁹ In N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; op cit; p. 14.

⁷⁷⁰ See N. Matar: *The Renegade in English 17th century Imagination*, cited in D.J. Vitkus: *Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam in 16th and 17th century Europe*; in *Western Perceptions* (Banks-Frassetto ed); op cit; pp. 207-30; p. 221.

⁷⁷¹ M. Morsy: *North Africa 1800-1900*; (Longman; London; 1984); p. 72-3.

⁷⁷² Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1640, p. 231; in C. Lloyd: *English Corsairs on the Barbary Coast*; (Collins; London; 1981); p. 124.

terrorism.⁷⁷³ From the Saracen knights of medieval romance to the Barbary pirates and Turkish pashas of early modern ‘report,’ tales of hostage taking and captivity have been emphasised in Western narratives about the Islamic world.⁷⁷⁴ These ‘Islamic villains usually come to a violent end, howling obscene curses and shrieking as their souls go straight to hell.’⁷⁷⁵

The biggest fear was that captured Christians would lose their faith to Islam, and be damned for eternity, a conversion equated with every form of crime. Samuel Hartib confirmed in his ‘Remonstrance of 1644 that poverty made ‘many who would live honestly to cheat, lie, steal, kill, turn Turk, or anything.’⁷⁷⁶ Matar notes how:

‘When a money collector entered a village public house and church, he told tales of horror about the captors, thereby projecting a frightening image of the Turks and Moors. The certificates often included a formula warning people that unless they offered money, the captives would remain unransomed and would subsequently ‘turn Turk’ and so be lost to their families and country. To villagers whose knowledge of the ‘Mahumetans’ may have exclusively derived from wandering players or parish preachers, the collector provided what might have seemed as the most authentic description of Muslims: cruel infidels who compelled Christians, with torture and savagery, to renounce their much-loved God and monarch.’⁷⁷⁷

These depictions and fears associated with them lasted until the colonial period, and justified the Western invasion of the Muslim world. How French colonisation of North Africa used piracy and cruel treatment of Christians as justifications will be looked at in the final chapter.

Today, we have the same depictions of Muslims as barbaric captors of others, especially of Westerners. The tragic pictures of Western hostages in Iraq and the beheading of some of them by supposedly Muslim extremists (oddly enough always masked, although telling us

⁷⁷³ See N. Matar: *The Renegade*; op cit; p. 221.

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁵ D.J. Vitkus: *Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam*; op cit; p. 221.

⁷⁷⁶ S. Hartib: *The Hartib Papers*; CD Rom; (1995).

⁷⁷⁷ N. Matar: Introduction; in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*; Edited by D.J. Vitkus; (Columbia University Press; New York); 2001; p. 25.

who they are, and their barbaric crimes always highly publicised, including in countries which ban much less gruesome images and websites than these) are indeed, truly the most barbaric of all images. Such images and scenes reinforce the already powerful view of the Muslim as a cruel hater of the Westerner, a bestial captor, besides, of course, confirming his barbaric nature, adding more stains to his faith, and of course, making the task of his slayer a noble one.

However, these depictions of the Muslims as barbaric captors are fundamentally fallacious, and whilst, one insists again that there are countless vile and evil Muslims, who have committed, and still commit terrible crimes the world over, the Muslims, as a community, as history and today's reality show us, have remained the most humane of all captors. When comparing the status and conditions of captives, both Muslims and Christians, especially during the period when large numbers of Christians fell into Muslim captivity, it shows that the lot of the Christians was much more enviable than that of the Muslims; the Muslims' fate in Christian hands, throughout the ages, remaining the most appalling.

a. Muslims under Christian Captivity:

In the medieval period considerable numbers of Muslims fell under Christian captivity. Their fate was universally horrific: their mass slaughter was a rule. In 1191, for instance, Acre was retaken by the crusaders and Richard of England, devious and greedy,⁷⁷⁸ had thousands of Muslim prisoners beheaded before the walls as a hint to Salah Eddin to hurry to pay the ransom of prisoners.⁷⁷⁹ Richard had not just the garrison massacred, but also women and children.⁷⁸⁰

At the very decisive battle of Navas de Tolosa, in 1212, Al-Nasir's much superior Muslim army was crushed, and in the wake of the battle, 70,000 Muslim prisoners were slaughtered at the order of the Bishops of Toledo and Narbonne who were at the scene.⁷⁸¹ In contrast, not long before, on

⁷⁷⁸ P. W. Edbury: *The Conquest of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade*, (Scolar Press, 1996); p.97.

⁷⁷⁹ F.Guizot: *History of France*; London; 1872; 8 Vols.439 fwd; E. Gibbon: *The Decline and Fall*; op cit; VI; p. 119.

⁷⁸⁰ M. Hodgson: *The Venture*, op cit; p. 267.

⁷⁸¹ T.B. Irving: *Dates, Names and Places: The end of Islamic Spain*; in *Revue d'Histoire Maghrebine*; No 61-62; 1991; pp 77-93; at p. 81.

18th July, 1196, Abu Yusuf Yaqub al-Mansur inflicted a crushing defeat on Alfonso VIII of Castile at Alarcos, the Christian army being virtually exterminated.⁷⁸² After the victory, Abu Yaqub freed twenty thousand Christian prisoners without even demanding a ransom.⁷⁸³

In the rare instances when Muslims were not slaughtered, their fate was dreadful. The late 12th century Muslim traveller, Ibn Jubayr, who went to crusader-held territory, devotes some of his most emotional lines to a description of the captive Muslim men stumbling in shackles and doing hard labour like slaves, and the captive Muslim women plodding along with iron rings on their legs.⁷⁸⁴ Muslims had been enslaved during the crusader conquest and many were captured and enslaved again during subsequent rounds of Frankish-Muslim warfare.⁷⁸⁵ Any Muslim seeking to escape their fate by running away risked losing their legs when caught.⁷⁸⁶

Subsequently, in the so-called Barbary Corsair era (17th-18th centuries), the treatment of Muslim captives remained equally dreadful. The French mathematician, Bachet, in his textbook: *Problemes*, published in Lyons in 1624, uses the following example as one of his problems:

‘A ship carrying as passengers fifteen Turks and fifteen Christians, encountered a storm. The pilot declared that, in order to save the ship and crew, one half of the passengers must be thrown into the sea. To choose the victims the passengers were arranged in a circle and it was agreed that every ninth man should be cast overboard, reckoning from a certain point. It is desired to find an arrangement by which all the Christians should be saved!’⁷⁸⁷

Of course, anecdote mirrors reality. In their galleys, the French tried West African Blacks and Iroquois Indians, both unsuccessfully; and the elites of such galleys remained the Muslims of North Africa.⁷⁸⁸ Turkish

⁷⁸² J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p.190.

⁷⁸³ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁴ Ibn Jubayr: *Travels*; p. 322; in B. Z. Kedar: *The Subjected Muslims of the Frankish Levant*, in *Muslims Under Latin Rule, 1100-1300*, ed J.M. Powell (Princeton University Press, 1990), pp 135-74. at p.153.

⁷⁸⁵ In B. Z. Kedar: *The Subjected Muslims*; op cit; p.153.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid; p.170.

⁷⁸⁷ P. Earle: *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*; (Sidgwick and Jackson; London; 1970); p. 8.

⁷⁸⁸ See for instance: P. Bamford: *Slaves for the galleys of France; 1665-1700*; in John Parker (ed) *Merchants and Scholars*; (Minneapolis; 1965); and Ibid: *The Procurement of Oarsmen for the French galleys; 1660-1748*; *American Historical Review*; Lxv (1959).

or North African slaves were always preferred for galleys, particularly those of France, because they were a tougher breed than convicts.⁷⁸⁹ Experts considered the Turks, and especially the North Africans, to have no equal as rowers, and it was felt essential to have at least one Muslim slave per bench.⁷⁹⁰ In the 18th century the galleys of France declined in importance until the Corps des Galeres (The Corps of Galleys) was abolished in 1748, but as Bamford said:

‘The Infidel Turk, with his distinctive clothing, moustache and reputation for physical strength, was a symbol of the old fighting galley.’⁷⁹¹

As late as 1712 there were over 1000 Turks in the galleys. Spanish, Neapolitan, and Papal galleys were also a destination for Muslim slaves sold in Malta.⁷⁹² The life of a galley slave has been described by a Frenchman who had experienced it:

‘Picture to yourself six men chained to a bench, naked as they were born, one foot on the stretcher, the other lifted and placed against the bench in front of him, supporting in their hands a heavy oar and stretching their bodies backward while their arms were extended to push the loom of the oar clear of the backs of those in front of them... sometimes the galley slaves row ten, twelve and even twenty hours at a stretch, without the slightest rest or break. On these occasions the officer will go round and put pieces of bread soaked in wine into the mouths of the wretched rowers to prevent them from fainting. Then the captain will call upon the officers to redouble their blows, and if a slave falls exhausted over his oar (which is quite a common occurrence) he is flogged until he appears to be dead and is thrown overboard without ceremony.’⁷⁹³

Christians who had converted to Islam, when caught, were handed over to the Inquisition.⁷⁹⁴

Those who have experienced Muslim and Christian captivity on land witnessed to the harshness of the latter. As Lloyd points out, compared with the hard life of a seaman on board a merchant vessel, not to say the navy which was worse, a common seaman cannot have found life in bagnio (Muslim prison) much harder, certainly as many have left on

⁷⁸⁹ C. Lloyd: *English Corsairs*; op cit; p. 146.

⁷⁹⁰ P. Earle: *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*; op cit; p. 170.

⁷⁹¹ P.W. Bamford: *The Procurement of Oarsmen*; op cit; p. 47.

⁷⁹² P. Earle: *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*; op cit; p. 170.

⁷⁹³ Quot Bradfor 33.

⁷⁹⁴ C. Lloyd: *English Corsairs*; op cit; p. 146.

record, it was preferable to life in a European gaol.⁷⁹⁵ Edward Coxere, who was freed after Blake bombarded the port of Tunis, became a Quaker and, as soon as he returned home, was imprisoned under the Conventicle Act. This is how he compared his captivity in Yarmouth prison with that of Tunis:

‘They allowed us water enough to drink, but nothing to eat, nor bread to be brought us, nor nobody to come near us... Such unkind usage I never had when I was a slave under the hands of the Turks, such as Christians call Infidels, that though I was chained a nights with great iron chain, and was made to work a days, and sometimes beat, yet they gave me bellyful of bread to eat with my water; but here, among my countrymen and such as called Christians, they gave me not the privilege as they gave their dogs, for they would deny anyone to give them a crust of bread.’⁷⁹⁶

And whilst the fate of Christians in Muslim captivity (as the following heading amply shows) was hopeful, the case of Muslims in Christian captivity was hopeless. Earle speaks about a Muslim slave from Damietta who petitioned for his freedom in 1682. He said that he had been a slave for fifty four years, fifty of which he had spent as an oarsman in the galleys.⁷⁹⁷ On two occasions he had been promised his liberty for special services. The first was at the battle of the Dardanelles in 1656. Twenty years later he was again promised his liberty for his services in burying infected slaves during the plague of 1676. Neither of these promises had been honoured, however, and ‘now the poor supplicant is over eighty years old and desires to finish his life in his own country’, for which reason he begged that ‘he could be placed in the number of old slaves who are being sent to liberty as a result of alms sent from Barbary.’⁷⁹⁸

There is an interesting account of the end of the Muslim captives in Malta:

‘In 1749, an alleged slave plot led to a trial ‘when nearly all the slaves were condemned to death. They were tortured and executed in batches. Most of the ‘Infidels’ were marched through the streets of Valetta and led to high scaffolds erected in the public squares on which they were birched, branded and finally hanged, beheaded or quartered. Those who consented to

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid; pp. 25-6.

⁷⁹⁶ E. Coxere: *Adventures by Sea*; ed . E.H.W. Meyerstein; (1945); p.100.

⁷⁹⁷ P. Earle: *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*; op cit; pp. 171-2.

⁷⁹⁸ *Archives of the Order of Malta*; 646; P.215

be baptised were put to death without further torture. These cruel scenes went on for a whole month, the (Christian) knights showing themselves pitiless avengers.⁷⁹⁹

The Muslims who fell into the captivity of the Inquisition is too horrific, too traumatic to go into here beyond this short extract. The Inquisition was a medieval Catholic invention. Its purpose was to remove 'heretics' from the midst of Christians. In Spain, its main victims were the Muslims and Jews. Generally, they ended up tortured in dungeons, confessing whatever their accusers sought to make them confess, burnt at the stake, or disappeared for ever, their properties confiscated, their families thrown into perpetual want. The best work on the subject of Christian persecution of Muslims through the Inquisition is by Henry Charles Lea who studied contemporary accounts and sources.⁸⁰⁰ The following extracts from his work are by Thomson and Rahim:

'The Inquisitors felt it their duty to investigate their (the Muslims' and Jews') minds, and to eliminate anyone whose words or deeds confirmed their suspicion. Their methods were even more callous and efficient than the ones which had been employed by the medieval Inquisition in France. According to Mariana:

'What caused the most surprise was that children paid for the crimes of their parents, and that accusers were not named or made known, nor confronted by the accused, nor was there publication of witnesses: all of which was contrary to the practice used of old in other tribunals.... And what was most serious was that because of these secret investigations, they were deprived of the liberty to hear and talk freely, since in all cities, towns and villages there were persons placed to give information of what went on. This was considered by some the most wretched slavery and equal to death.'⁸⁰¹

Then, death in Christian hands meant, in general, burning alive. Countless numbers of Muslims, tens of thousands, possibly, were burnt alive at the stake. Even in their death, the Muslims had crowds standing armed with stones ready to throw at them as soon as the Muslims started reciting their shahadas.⁸⁰²

⁷⁹⁹ T. Zammit: *History of Malta*; (Valetta; 1929); p. 248.

⁸⁰⁰ H.C. Lea: *The Moriscos of Spain*; (Burt Franklin; New York; 1968 reprint).

-H. C. Lea: *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, 4 vols; (The Mac Millan Company, New York, 1907).

⁸⁰¹ A. Thomson-M.A. Rahim: *Islam in Andalus*; op cit; p. 121.

⁸⁰² H.C. Lea: *The Moriscos of Spain*; op cit.

-H. C. Lea: *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, op cit.

The condition of Muslim captives in Western hands in recent times is a continuity of terrible sufferings and, generally, tragic ends, in every place and at all times. The killings of Muslim prisoners during the colonial period, whether in India, or in Egypt, and parts of Africa would fill volumes, just like the traumatic experiences they went through by torture, and other forms of humiliations.⁸⁰³ The recent French history in Algeria (1954-1962) is only a succession of mass torture of Algerians, executions en masse, extra-judicial killings in the tens of thousands, killings, which the French generally attributed to the 'rebels' fighting them (allegedly settling scores with their countrymen). Alleg *et al* offer an insight into instances of French torture.⁸⁰⁴

'Claude Lecerf resides in a camp, where between 150 and 200 Algerians are crammed, waiting for their deaths, sleeping on straw-covered floors. Every day and every night, more operations bring in more prisoners. Above the camp is situated the interrogation centre, where torture is systematic, many leaving in a coma, many more dying under torture. The soldiers load the corpses into trucks and take them for mass burial somewhere in the countryside.

At night the paratroopers force their way inside homes, which they ransack and loot,... (and bring in more prisoners).

Often, 'attempts to escape by prisoners' are simulated; then the prisoners are shot in the back...

Lecerf has seen many killings of prisoners in cold blood. One evening, one captain, P, gathers prisoners, gives them lessons on morality, and then shoots two in the head. Other officers fire in the air in direction of the rest, who run, and get cut by barbed wire... That was a recreation for the French....

All over the city (of Algiers), more prisoners are brought in to more camps. Those who have been tortured are taken out to identify more suspects. They have their heads covered in black cagoules, with two openings for their eyes. Traitors, perhaps, but surely people who because of torture have lost all control and mind. Their role is to point at others in the crowd of Algerians, who are then picked, thrown into trucks, just like dogs, and conducted to more centres for torture...

⁸⁰³ W. Howitt: *Colonisation and Christianity*: (Longman; London; 1838).

H. Alleg, J. de Bonis; H.J. Douzon; J. Freire; P. Haudiquet: *La Guerre d'Algerie*, (Temps Actuels; Paris; 1981).

⁸⁰⁴ H. Alleg et al: *La Guerre d'Algerie*; op cit; vol 2; pp. 463 ff.

On top of torture, prisoners are disappeared in their thousands, the general secretary of Algiers prefecture citing the figure of 3,000 disappeared before the end of March 1957, and the countless thousands more who were not even counted... Interrogation centres abound, in villas, private apartments, farms, sites under construction, caves...

Anyone who succumbs to torture is executed. The rule is that someone who had been tortured could not be liberated. The same is applied to intellectuals. At night more sorties are carried out in covered trucks, collecting in all centres of interrogation the countless many. Everyone is thrown on board, the half dead from torture included, all taken to large mass graves, and there the men of unit O liquidate everyone with pistols and knives... Others are taken by helicopters above the sea, and there, a large piece of concrete is tied to their feet, and they are thrown down never to resurface again. There are also many buildings being erected, and in the concrete, in the foundations of these buildings, many corpses are buried.⁸⁰⁵

Today, the fate of Muslims under Western captivity is that of disappeared Muslim captives in their hundreds at least, if not thousands, people completely vanishing as if the earth had swallowed them.⁸⁰⁶ Abu Ghreib, Guantanamo Bay, etc.... are the best-known instances of the mass torture and mass mistreatment of Muslims. In Iraq, as in many other countries, the dirty work, i.e. the arrest, followed by mass torture and mass killing, and extra-judicial killings of tens of thousands of suspects, opponents, and 'insurgents,' is done by proxies and their death squads⁸⁰⁷ (killings and other outrages, which then, the Western and other media, from a long and safe distance, in their cosy and comfortable world, and completely hardened to the fate of Muslims, conveniently attribute to sectarian or terrorist killings). Worse, even, is the inhumane practice by Western powers of seizing countless numbers of Muslims who sought refuge in their lands, and delivering them to 'Muslim' regimes whose only expertise is to inflict the worst cruelties on other humans, from boiling them alive to drilling

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid; p. 469.

⁸⁰⁶ See various reports by Human Rights agencies in 2005-6 on such disappeared Muslims.

⁸⁰⁷ See various sources already cited above (as in chapter one), and The Times online - January 10 2005

(<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/iraq/article410491.ece>).

into their flesh, to decapitations and mutilations and rape,⁸⁰⁸ and still Westerners are delivering people to such regimes, which they protect and sponsor (as moderate/progressive allies of the West), call themselves civilised.

b. Christians under the Captivity of Muslims:

There are hardly any Christian captives of Muslims today. The focus here, therefore, is on the period when countless numbers of Christians were in Muslim captivity, that is centuries ago.

Western rhetoric has painted the Turks and their North African allies as the worst fiends, brutalising Christians. The picture of innocent Christian victims impaled outside Muslim city gates is still revived as recently as 2003 by the BBC,⁸⁰⁹ the BBC dwelling on the Barbary corsairs swooping on Christian coastal villages, and enslaving hundreds of thousands of women and children.

Yet, again, this is a fallacy that has endured for centuries. First and foremost, as will be shown in abundant detail further on, the worst of piracy was not inflicted by the Turks on the Christians, but quite the reverse; Christian piracy against Muslims in fact beginning in the 11th century.⁸¹⁰ Throughout the centuries it was sanctioned by the papacy as a policy to ruin the Muslim realm; which it eventually did.⁸¹¹ Besides, Earle and Bono,⁸¹² and above all Fisher, the rare historians who compared Muslim and Christian misdeeds in the sea, arrived at the same conclusion, condemning the usual Barbary corsair legends and cruelties.⁸¹³

⁸⁰⁸ The issue of rendering prisoners to these countries, and plane flights carrying prisoners between the West and other parts, has been widely publicised in 2006; for the latest, see G. Monbiot in *The Guardian* 8 May 07; p. 25.

⁸⁰⁹ BBC 2: Timewatch; 10 January 2003.

⁸¹⁰ F. Braudel: *Grammaire des Civilisations*; op cit; at p.89.

⁸¹¹ W. Heyd: *Histoire du Commerce du Levant au Moyen Age*; (A.M. Hakkert Editor; Amsterdam; 1967).

⁸¹² P. Earle: *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*; op cit; S. Bono: *I Corsari Barbareschi*; (Torino; 1964).

⁸¹³ G. Fisher: *The Barbary legend*; op cit.

Although untrue, like other negative depictions of Islam and Muslims, the Western portrayal of barbaric treatment of Christian captives by the Turks had many objectives. Stories were derived from professionals concerned with raising money for ransom, and from escaped prisoners selling their adventures in a popular market that expected sensation.⁸¹⁴

This is noted by Cervantes who in his *Persiles* shows false captives busy cheating 'curious crowds.'⁸¹⁵ Much, thus, was made by propagandists in Europe to stress the hardships of life in this Gulag Archipelago of the Mediterranean, Lloyd says.⁸¹⁶

There were religious motivations, too, behind exaggerating Muslim bad treatment of Western captives. Rehbinders is particularly scathing about the Catholic priests and their bigoted anti-Islamic writings.⁸¹⁷

Much of what we know about Barbary was written by men who had a very definite interest in painting as black a picture as they could. This was particularly true of the Redemptionist fathers who told lies about the condition of the slaves 'in order to excite the charity of the faithful.'⁸¹⁸ De Tassy accuses the Catholic priests for the spread of prejudice against the Turks, explaining that:

'It is normal that those whose duty is to buy off slaves had great interest to arouse great emotions within a public from whom they expect donations... They vaunt the services they render to the public by going to Barbary to redeem bogus slaves, who roam the world as beggars and tell tales of their slavery in North Africa.'⁸¹⁹

Exacerbated Christian prejudices, Thomson notes, are to be found in the accounts by the 'Peres Redempteurs' who, in addition to being monks, were concerned to present the North Africans in the worst possible light in order to arouse their readers' sympathies and to raise the money to buy back the captives who, in their eyes, risked not only their lives, but most of all their salvation at the hands of the Infidels.⁸²⁰

The aim was also, above all, to excite Christian zeal against the Muslim 'Infidel'.⁸²¹ As Barbour writes:⁸²²

⁸¹⁴ N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; op cit; p.14.

⁸¹⁵ In D. Brahimi: *Opinions et regards*; op cit; p.122.

⁸¹⁶ C. Lloyd: *English Corsairs on the Barbary Coast*; op cit; p. 116.

⁸¹⁷ Rehbinders: *Nachrichten und Bemerkungen uber den algerischen Staat*, 3 vols. (Altona, 1798-1800); Vol 1; pp 9 fwd.

⁸¹⁸ Chevalier d'Arvieux: *Memoires*; (Paris; 1735); iii; p. 458.

⁸¹⁹ Laugier de Tassy *Histoire du Royaume d'Alger*; (Amsterdam; 1725), in Denise Brahimi: *Opinions et regards des Europeens*; op cit; p. 122.

⁸²⁰ A. Thomson: *Barbary and Enlightenment*; op cit. p. 19.

⁸²¹ Ibid; p. 26.

⁸²² N. Barbour: *A Survey of North Africa*; (Oxford University Press; 1959); p. 37.

‘Certainly the accounts of their sufferings, written by Christian captives, are often heart-rending, but if we had accounts written by the Muslim captives in Malta, who were sold in large numbers to the French Government as galley slaves, we should no doubt find them just as moving as those of the prisoners in Algiers.

Even the evidence for the ill-treatment of the Christian captives, however, is much less convincing than might be supposed by those who know only the literature circulated by the Christian agencies concerned with the redemption of slaves and the voluminous literature based on them. A French Marine Commissary who lived in Algiers in the first half of the eighteenth century and dedicated his book on Algiers to the French Consul in that city, while recognizing the relatively ‘uncivilized’ or unpolished character of life in Algiers, flatly denied that Christian captives were in general badly treated. Having himself been a prisoner of war of the Spanish in 1706, he says that he ‘would prefer ten years of slavery in Algiers to one in Spain’.⁸²³

Muslim cruelties to their captives are, indeed, fallacies, when looking at the countless stories of contemporaries who fell under both Muslim and Christian captivity. In his account of captivity, Richard Haleston recalled the torture he had endured under his Catholic captors (on the rack and in solitary confinement) and the kindness shown to him by an old Algerian who protected and fed him. Meanwhile, his wife was going around London describing his ‘most vile slavery and miserable bondage,’ not under the Catholics, but under the Algerians.⁸²⁴ A contemporary, De La Croix, insists:

‘We should agree, it is better to fall in the hands of the worst Bey (Turk) galley, than in the hands of the Viceroy of Naples.’⁸²⁵

The general behaviour of the Muslim corsairs when capturing a ship was very much better than that of their Maltese rivals, and incomparably better than that of a contemporary English privateer.⁸²⁶

⁸²³ Laugier de Tassy: *Histoire du Royaume d’Alger*; (Amsterdam; 1735); p. 329; in N. Barbour; p. 37.

⁸²⁴ Guildhall Library; London; Ms 9234/2; in N. Matar: Introduction; op cit; note 101; p. 46.

⁸²⁵ De la Croix; in N. Daniel: *Islam and the West*; op cit; p. 309.

⁸²⁶ See, K.R. Andrews: *Elizabethan Privateering*; (Cambridge; 1964); pp. 40-3.

Fisher notes the contrast drawn by Sir Henry Blount between the barbarism of English seamen and the 'extraordinary civility' of the Turks,⁸²⁷ which appears to be endorsed by Admiral Badiley, who had had long experience of the Levant trade. At a critical juncture he warned a colleague of the case of a converted Turk who reverted to his old religion after witnessing the excesses on shore of some English sailors.⁸²⁸

English writers and observers agree that enslavement on Muslim ships was better than on French, Italian, or Spanish galleys.⁸²⁹ Some sailors, such as Webbe, Hasleton, and Coxere, experienced captivity at the hands of both Muslim and Christian slave masters and were able to compare treatment: they described far more horrible treatment at the hands of Italian and Spanish captors than that received from North African privateers.⁸³⁰ In 1635 Henry Kebell wrote that he and his companions would have preferred to 'have fallen into the Turks' hands than into Frenchmen's, for they [the French] would have hoysed them overboard.⁸³¹ Instead, many of the Christian captives were taken straight on as sailors, divided into watches under the eyes of the soldiers.⁸³² Although when off duty they were normally confined, they seem to have been chained up only when the ship was actually going into action.⁸³³ Passengers were generally treated with respect. Women were almost invariably well treated. Anyone who touched a woman in a sensual manner ran a very great risk of being bastinadoed.⁸³⁴ Pananti goes so far as to advise future captives to give any gold or other valuables that they might have to the female passengers 'as the Turks hold their persons sacred.'⁸³⁵

On land, Christian captives experienced far better conditions than can be imagined. The slaves lived in huge bagnios or courtyards under the direction of a guardian or a warden Pasha and a guard of janissaries. By the 17th century, the bigger bagnos, where most Christian captives

⁸²⁷ G. Fisher: *Barbary Legend*; op cit; p. 129.

⁸²⁸ T.A. Spalding: *Life of Admiral Badiley*; (Westminster; 1899); p. 135.

⁸²⁹ See, for instance, E. Neau: *An Account of the Sufferings of the French Protestants*; (London; 1699).

⁸³⁰ N. Matar: Introduction; op cit; p. 21.

⁸³¹ CSPD; *Charles I, 1634-5*, 7:325, in N. Matar: Introduction; op cit; p. 21.

⁸³² See experience of the American sailor John Foss: *A Journal of the captivity and suffering of John Foss: several years prisoner at Algiers*; (Newburyport; 1798); p. 9.

⁸³³ P. Dan: *Histoire de la Barbarie et de ses corsairs*; (Paris; 1637); p. 262.

⁸³⁴ P. Grandchamp: Une Mission delicate en Barbarie au XVII em siecle: J.B. Salvago, drogman Venitien, a Alger et a Tunis; *Revue Tunisienne*; xxx (1937); p. 473.

⁸³⁵ F. Pananti: *Narrative of a residence in Algiers*; (1818); p. 355.

were kept, were able to provide considerable comforts that must have made the life of a slave much easier to bear.⁸³⁶ Captives were put to work in household service, in farming, gardening, building, animal husbandry, or in business.⁸³⁷ 'We were suffered to work upon any manner of trade or occupation wherein we were any way expert... and what we did or made, we sold to the Turks, and they gave us money for the same, wrote Edward Webbe in 1591.⁸³⁸ The 18th century Spanish captive, Joseph de Leon, stated that there were captives who worked in shops, as he did, and in steel and ammunition factories, while others opened taverns in which both captives and Moors congregated.⁸³⁹ In the bagnos there was usually a chapel and a hospital, where father Dan noted that seven priests celebrated Mass at an improvised altar before dawn to 600 captives.'⁸⁴⁰ Chapels, Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox, served mainly by captured priests or visiting Redemptionist fathers were found in most bagnos, shops and medical facilities were provided, and later slave hospitals were built, and there was even the possibility of relaxation.⁸⁴¹ One should add that women and priest captives in the Barbary Coast were exempted from work.⁸⁴² Capturing the general condition of Western captives under the Muslims is the comment of Joseph Morgan, a resident at Algiers and the translator of the narrative of a Trinitarian mission in 1719. He takes the good Father to task in these words:

'O fie, Father! Tho' it is part of your function to make a dismal story of slavery among the Infidels, yet you should, methinks, adhere only to the truth. You came very lately from Marseilles, where you must have seen the Turks, Moors, etc, in much worse condition than the most unhappy Beylik slaves in Algiers, especially since the Algerines have disused galleys. The Beylik slaves of Algiers are at free liberty to play, to work for themselves, or steal, three hours before sunset... neither it is less certain that thousands of Algerian captives live abundantly happier (want of freedom excepted) than ever they can hope to do at home; and that very many are excused with a few bastinadoes for crimes for which they would have suffered

⁸³⁶ S. Bono: *I Corsari barbareschi*; op cit; pp. 225-49 discusses the life of slaves.

⁸³⁷ N. Matar: introduction; op cit; p. 18.

⁸³⁸ E. Webbe: *The Rare and most wonderful things....* Edited by E. Arber; (London; Alex Murray and Son; 1868); p. 27.

⁸³⁹ C de la Veronne: *Vie de Moulay Ismail...* (Paris; Paul Geuthner; 1974); pp. 157-8.

⁸⁴⁰ C. Lloyd: *English Corsairs on the Barbary Coast*; op cit; p. 115.

⁸⁴¹ S. Bono: *I Corsari barbareschi*; op cit; pp. 225-49.

⁸⁴² M. Morsy: *North Africa 1800-1900*; op cit; p. 66.

the wheel in most parts of Europe, or at least made their exit in a halter.⁸⁴³

Many captives commented on the latitude shown to them by their Muslim captors, the like of which was never regularly shown to Muslim captives in England, Spain or France.⁸⁴⁴ Thomas Smith recalled his captivity in Algiers as 'the happy time of my slavery,' Francis Knight had 'an honest moral man' for a captor, and William Okeley was tempted not to escape to England, where there was civil unrest and poverty, but to stay instead with his captors who had gainfully employed him.⁸⁴⁵ Joshua Gee recalled the generosity of one captor who shared his food with him; Joseph Pitts was adopted by his last master, who treated him as his son.⁸⁴⁶ Nash and Parker, two merchants, were captives in Sallee (Morocco) for four years, during which time they learned the language and trade of the country, and then 'set up a House in Tetuan in the Year that the English quitted Tangier [1684], which House has continued ever since; and it is said those Gentlemen before they left Barbary got better fortunes in it, than they lost by being taken.'⁸⁴⁷

Chevalier d'Arvieux wrote of his experiences in the Regency of Tunis as an envoy of Louis XIV in that country between 1665-1675, where he helped secure the freedom of Christian slaves through negotiations with the Turks. When he negotiated a treaty at Tunis in 1666 he was surprised at the tolerance shown to captives and the comforts enjoyed by domestic slaves 'they live very commodiously for their state of life and provided they are willing to work, pretty much at their ease.'⁸⁴⁸ His *Memoires* were only published long after his death in 1702 by Father Labat in 1735. He writes:

'We imagine that the Christians who have the misfortune to be slaves in Barbary are tortured in a very cruel manner and the most un-human treatment inflicted on them. There are people who in order to stir the charity of the faithful pour with great assurance these lies: their intention although good is still always a lie. They forget that in this instance that it is not right to cause harm so as to derive good. I, too, have been in this

⁸⁴³ J. Morgan: *Several Voyages to Barbary*; (1736); p. 44.

⁸⁴⁴ N. Matar: Introduction; op cit; p. 19.

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid; p. 20.

⁸⁴⁷ Captain Braithwaite: *The History of the Revolutions in the Empire of Morocco*; (London; 1729); p. 67.

⁸⁴⁸ D'Arvieux: *A Levantine Adventurer* by W.H. Lewis; (1962); p. 124.

situation like many others.... But what I saw in Tunis has convinced me these people are full of humanity, as I witnessed that our slaves on the boats waiting to sail were fed every day (fruit, meat, bread...)... and some of these slaves demanded that they stayed with their masters until the day they left for home; and I agreed. Their masters shared their meals with them, gave them tobacco, and looked after them as if they were their own children. They kissed them on the day of parting, and assured them, that if business or misfortune brought them back to the country, they could freely live with them, and they would be more than welcome.⁸⁴⁹

Islam teaches kindness and pity towards slaves, and there are many instances of slaves being treated much better in Barbary than they had ever been as free men in Christian Europe. D'Arvieux said of the slaves of Mehmed Beg, the son of the Pasha of Tunis, that they were so well treated that they had forgotten their own country, 'where they knew they would never be so much at their ease, as they were with him.'⁸⁵⁰ As Earle insists, often, indeed, it might be hard to tell who was a slave and who was master, so important did the slave become in the domestic economy of Islam. It is therefore wise to treat with caution the horrific descriptions of the life of slaves in Barbary.⁸⁵¹

Many Christian captives did so well under Muslim captivity that they had no desire to leave. A captive who had made a success of business in 'Barbary' might well pay off his ransom, and continue as a free Christian merchant.⁸⁵² One might mention the examples of the American John Cathcart who, as a captive in Algiers, became relatively wealthy by running taverns (which Christians, though prisoners, were allowed to do) and who, when freed, asked to be posted to North Africa; he thus became the USA's first consul in Tripoli in 1799.⁸⁵³ The American consul named that same year in Algiers, Richard O'Brien, had also been a slave there for ten years, whilst Simon Lucas, British consul in Tripoli (1793-1801), had been a captive in Morocco.⁸⁵⁴ Another American Consul, W. Shaler, wrote:

⁸⁴⁹ Chevalier D'Arvieux (1995): *Tunis: Le sort des esclaves chretiens*; pp 457-61; vol iii; in Denise Brahimi: *Opinions et regards des Europeens sur le Maghreb aux 17em et 18em siecles*; (SNED; Algiers; 1978); pp. 75-6.

⁸⁵⁰ L. D'Arvieux: *Memoires du Chevalier d'Arvieux*; op cit; p. 499.

⁸⁵¹ P. Earle: *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*; op cit; p. 82.

⁸⁵² *Ibid*; p. 91.

⁸⁵³ M. Morsy: *North Africa 1800-1900*; op cit; p. 66.

⁸⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

‘It is no more than justice to say that their condition was not generally worse than that of prisoners of war in many civilized Christian countries. Female captives were always treated with the respect due to their sex; the labour required of the men was not excessive; those who could find security that they would not escape, were allowed to go at large on the payment of about 75 cents per month; there were a number of lucrative offices that were always occupied by slaves, in which many enriched themselves; those who were employed in the palace, or attached to the great officers of state, were treated with the greatest mildness; and generally all those who were industriously disposed easily found the means of profiting by it. In short there were slaves who left Algiers with regret, and it is believed that, in the aggregate, they carried away vast sums at their embarkation.’⁸⁵⁵

Many of the Christian captives not only did not return home, but also converted to Islam, and settled permanently in the Muslim world.⁸⁵⁶ In the ‘Barbary States’ the ‘renegados’ (i.e. converts to Islam) rose to high positions, whilst in Turkey itself, Polish, Hungarian, and other Eastern Europeans entered the stream of Islamic life.⁸⁵⁷ After learning of the large number of Christian converts who had risen in power and prominence in Algeria and Tunisia, Robert Burton concluded that the Christians who ‘will turn Turk... shall be entertained as brother.’⁸⁵⁸ When the Scottish traveller, William Lithgow, visited the Englishman Captain Ward in 1616, Ward was living in great style, retired from the sea and enjoying the fruits thereof. He had ‘turned Turk’ and built there a fair palace, beautified with rich marble and alabaster stones.⁸⁵⁹ Chevalier D’Arvieux also describes the pomp and status the slave Don Manuel attained in Tunisia in the 1660s.⁸⁶⁰ Father Dan described the extraordinary number of nations represented amongst the Algerian janissaries and was amazed at their peaceful co-existence. ‘They all live in great harmony, and only very rarely quarrel with each other.’⁸⁶¹ A few Christian renegades acquired even greater power, even

⁸⁵⁵ W. Shaler: *Sketches of Algiers*; (Boston; 1826); p. 76.

⁸⁵⁶ N. Matar: Introduction; op cit; p. 2.

⁸⁵⁷ In N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe and Empire*; op cit; p. 10.

⁸⁵⁸ R. Burton: *The Anatomy of Melancholy*; ed Holdbrook Jackson; (London; Dent; 1977); p. 349.

⁸⁵⁹ W. Lithgow: *The Total Discourse of the Rare Adventures*; (1632; Repr. 1906); p. 315.

⁸⁶⁰ L. D’Arvieux: *Memoires du Chevalier d’Arvieux*; op cit; pp. 438-9.

⁸⁶¹ P. Dan: *Histoire de Barbarie et de ses corsairs*; (Paris; 1637); p. 110

becoming Bey or Dey, (i.e. the country's leaders or regional governors.)⁸⁶²

All the above stories, as Matar points out, explains why the Algerian scholar Moulay Belhamissi has urged that the study of captivity accounts should discriminate between what is "histoire" and what is "hysteric," between what actually happened and what captives, their relatives, and modern historians have projected.⁸⁶³

Moving a century and half or so forward, during the French onslaught on Algeria (1830 onward) little mercy was shown towards the indigenous population. A French officer, on one of the countless expeditions, recounts:

'Order was given to deliver a war of devastation... So our soldiers acted with ferocity... women, children were slaughtered, homes burnt down, trees razed to the ground, nothing was spared... Kabyle women wore silver bracelets to the arms and around their ankles. Soldiers cut off all their limbs, and they did not always do it to the dead only.'⁸⁶⁴

And yet, when Emir Abdelkader (who led the resistance against the French), freeing his French prisoners said to them: 'I have nothing to feed you; I cannot kill you, thus I send you back home....' the prisoners full of admiration for the Emir, according to the French general St Arnaud: 'had their minds diseased,' and had been 'brainwashed.'⁸⁶⁵

Today, the pictures of Western captives being decapitated in Iraq are indeed some of the most distressing, and most repelling, images that hurt the eyes and the conscience. Whilst the terrible scenes of Muslim prisoners in Western captivity referred to above are equally repelling, the one thing to say is that the image of decapitation of Western prisoners is certainly at odds with Muslim traditions throughout history as seen above. The significant point to make in respect to these decapitations is that it seems odd that they are carried out by shadowy

⁸⁶² P. Earle: *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*; op cit; p. 31.

⁸⁶³ Moulay Belhamissi: *Captifs Chrétiens en Algérie à l'Epoque Ottomane: Histoire ou hystérie?*; in *Le Maghreb à l'Epoque Ottomane*; ed. A El-Moudden; (Casablanca; 1995); pp. 75-84. in N. Matar: *Introduction* op cit; p. 20.

⁸⁶⁴ P. Gaffarel: *l'Algérie: Histoire, conquête et colonisation*, Ed. F. Didot, (1883). in H. H. Alleg; et al: *La Guerre d'Algérie*, op cit; p.77.

⁸⁶⁵ General St Arnaud in a letter of 16 May 1842.

groups, or individuals, who at once tell us who they are, and yet hide their faces. It is equally odd that such gruesome killings by shadowy organisations are exhibited at length on web-sites, which survive and thrive when other sites are instantly removed or destroyed for much less than that. These killings also take place in a country torn by conflict, where most deaths are of decent politicians and leading figures, of imams, and of ordinary people, where the ultimate aim is to drag different religious communities to kill each other. These beheadings also take place in a country where death squads, including the supposedly 'Muslim' beheaders, operate with total impunity, free to roam, pick up their victims, kill them, dump them, most often in the same spots, day after day, in complete freedom, and with the help of considerable logistics, completely unbothered by checkpoints, patrols, etc. These death squads thrive in Iraq, just as they thrived in the countless countries where the same things happened in a not-too-distant past: South America, Central America, Vietnam, the Middle East and North Africa, where alleged extremists (whether left wing or Islamist) have inflicted gruesome deeds on their victims, the latter being generally the cultured and thriving elites, the decent people of all sorts, and decent, innocent Westerners. All these peoples' gruesome deaths have only served the interest of those who truly, and for decades, have inflicted terrible woes on humanity, and the interest of those very keen to portray Muslims as barbaric beheaders.

2. The Muslim as ‘the Pitiless Slave Trader’

As with previous issues, we find abundant literature and other forms of depictions of the Muslims as cruel, mass slave traders, whilst in reality there is little to support this. Slave trading is also one of those dark pages Western history shrugs off its shoulders and conveniently lays on the Muslims.

a. Western Propaganda about Muslim Slave Trading:

Denouncing ‘Muslim slave trading’ and praising the role of both Church and Empire in its abolition, H.A.L. Fisher writes:

‘The Destruction of the Portuguese slave trade with the western hemisphere was made possible only by the vigour of the British navy.

There remained the difficult and almost intractable problem of liberating Africa from the Arab slave gangs and the domestic slave trade which was carried on in the heart of the continent. A system of marine patrols, however excellent - and in the forties a sixth of the British navy was employed on the African patrol work - was clearly inadequate to cope with so vast an evil. The career of David Livingstone, the Scottish missionary, who, mostly on foot and with few native companions, crossed Africa between 1853 and 1856, opened out a new epoch and pointed to a new way. Livingstone’s African journeys brought home to the imagination of the British public the horrors of the Arab slave trade, which had its centre in Zanzibar, and led to the revival of the Abolitionist activity, the first fruit of which was the treaty between Britain and Zanzibar in 1873, which closed the great slave mart in that city.’⁸⁶⁶

Cardinal Lavigerie, who played the leading role in seeking to spread Christianity in Algeria during French colonisation of the country (1830-1962), explains that:

‘The expansion of this evil (slave trade) is due initially to the

⁸⁶⁶ H.A.L. Fisher: *A History of Europe (from the Beginning of the 18th century to 1937)*; (Eyre and Spottiswoode; London; 1952); p. 1033.

traditions of the Muslims of North Africa, those of Egypt and Turks. The Mahometans cannot, for reasons of debauchery, laziness, do without slaves, who infuse them with new strength and new blood.... Reducing a Negro to slavery, I was going to say, is one of their fundamental religious rules. They teach in their Qur'an that the Negro does not belong to the human race; that he is between man and the animal, even lower than the latter.... He (the Muslim) finds glory in reducing the blacks.'⁸⁶⁷

(Where the cardinal found the passages he refers to in the Qur'an is impossible to trace.)

Opposition to Lavigerie enraged him:

'The free thinkers and the Turks of Europe have truly a sad courage when they assert that Mahometanism fights slavery. To the contrary, Islam legitimises slavery, absolutely, here in the Sudan, in Syria, everywhere...'⁸⁶⁸

Literary fiction of the past, just like the cinema today, abounds with the same depictions of the evil Muslim slave trader. An example is Hassan, the Slaver in Rider Haggard's *Allan and the Holy Flower*, published in 1915. Hassan is cruel, and deceitful, and a villain. Here he is, dissuading the Western Christian hero with lies from advancing inland from the coast:

'The people in the interior are savages of the worst sort, whom hunger has driven to cannibalism.'

Here he is attempting a more subtle deceit:

'I see, honoured lord, that you are man of mettle not easily to be turned from your purpose. In the name of God the Compassionate, land and go wheresoever you like.'

We easily realise that 'we are in a nest of slave traders, and this Hassan is their leader.' And Hassan uses the language of religion, not only for the benefit of those he hopes to deceive, but naturally, for example, when his slaving is proved: 'God is great!' muttered the discomfited Hassan...

As for the cruelty of the Arabs, it is communal - not confined to Hassan at all - and ingrained... 'These Arabs, being black-hearted, kill those who can walk no more, or tie them up to die. If they let them go, they might recover and escape, and it makes the Arabs sad that those who have been their slaves should live to be free and happy.'⁸⁶⁹

⁸⁶⁷ Cardinal Lavigerie: *lettre sur l'Esclavage Africain, et l'esclavage Africain*, Conferences, Paris, (St Sulpice) and Brussels (Ste Gudule).

⁸⁶⁸ In N. Daniel: *Islam; Europe*; op cit; p. 307.

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid; p. 302.

The 'cruelties of the Muslim slave traders' are caught vividly by photographs, and also by the horrific tales of their victims reported to us by Christian missionaries and other Westerners. A Catholic missionary in 1888 describes how an African slave market was crowded with slaves, joined by cords or chains in long lines, and with others, revealing signs of starvation, in the streets. Nearby was a cemetery where the dying as well as the dead were left for the hyenas.⁸⁷⁰

The missionary A.J. Swann, on his way to Lake Tanganyika saw caravans of slaves who had journeyed 1,000 miles and had an additional 250 miles to go, and who were chained by the neck in long files, some of them in six foot forks, and with many of the women bearing babies on their backs. They were in filthy condition and many of them were scarred by the cuts of the hide whip.⁸⁷¹

Gordon writes:

'Europeans who travelled the Fezzan-Kawar route often recorded with horror the human skeletons with which it was strewn. Blanched bones, usually those of women and children were often piled up around wells, the telltale monuments of desperate effort to reach water.

While on the road, slaves often fell victim to disease or were killed or captured by marauding bands of brigands. The privations of the journey and short rations, often the result of indifference or penny-pinching attitudes of cost-minded merchants, made many of the slaves susceptible to illness and disease. Moving from one disease environment to another in a debilitated physical condition made slaves ready victims of contagious diseases such as cholera and smallpox. An epidemic among slaves in transit, whether by land or sea, was much to be feared. A caravan afflicted by smallpox might be condemned to wander in the desert, like a plague ship, shunned by all.'⁸⁷²

It is Christianity, we also learn, that has fervently combated this Islamic scourge. In January - February 2003, in a programme on the

⁸⁷⁰ R.W. Beachey: *The Slave Trade of Eastern Africa*; (London; Rex Collings; 1976); p. 187.

⁸⁷¹ A. J. Swann: *Fighting the Slave hunters in Central Africa*; (London; 1910); p. 48.

⁸⁷² M. Gordon: *Slavery in the Arab World*; (New Amsterdam; New York; 1989); p. 160.

British Empire, the television channel, Channel 4,⁸⁷³ explained that it was Christian zeal that banned slavery and even returned slaves to Africa. Ignoring all evidence to the contrary,⁸⁷⁴ and relying on the same source as Fisher above, that is Livingstone, the channel attributed the worst horrors of slave trading to the Muslims.⁸⁷⁵ Equally, the BBC religious programme *Everyman*,⁸⁷⁶ devoted a special programme to white Christian missionaries freeing Black African slaves from 'Muslim slave traders.' In this programme, hundreds of 'African slaves' are shown sitting on the ground, under a tree, awaiting the arrival of the two Muslim slave traders to collect the payment of their ransom from the missionaries. Once the two men arrive, and once the payment is done, the two slave traders (bearing no weapons of any sort) give orders to the hundred or so slaves seated on the ground to go free to the great joy of their relatives and the missionaries. Then the two Muslim slave traders return north.⁸⁷⁷

Films from Hollywood, scholarly books for children or college students, and the internet, all equally, incessantly, dwell on the Muslim slave trade of Africans and its horrors. Indeed, whilst American slaves are portrayed as quite happy, and the Western masters are portrayed as kind, philanthropic characters, and the Church activists are depicted as passionate in their striving to free slaves, the opposite holds for Muslims. The Muslims are portrayed as the vilest, cruellest traders of humans. In the film *Ashanti*, the Muslim is the vile, cruel, deceitful, cowardly slave trader. The hero, of course is the Western man, and all his qualities are beyond the pale of any Muslim: courage, humanity, love, generosity, etc...

Gradually, as the Western slave trade is removed from knowledge, instead, books of academic nature 'correct history,' and lecture us about the real slave trade, i.e. the Muslims', and the terrible woes it inflicted on the African continent. One of the recent works is by Murray Gordon: *Slavery in the Arab World*.⁸⁷⁸ Gordon opens his book in capital letters, as follows:

'SLAVERY IN THE ARAB WORLD ANTEDATED BY
MORE THAN a millennium the establishment of this

⁸⁷³ Seen on S4C; 18 February 2003; 12.10 am.

⁸⁷⁴ See. R. B. Smith: *Mohammed*; op cit; pp. 350-2.

⁸⁷⁵ Seen on S4C; 18 February 2003; 12.10 am.

⁸⁷⁶ BBC1 on 29 January 2001.

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁸ M. Gordon: *Slavery in the Arab World*; op cit.

appalling institution by Europeans in the New World. It continued to flourish, moreover, for more than a century after the tocsin had sounded for it in the West. As many as eleven million Africans, approximately the same number estimated to have been taken from Africa's West Coast in the European-controlled triangular slave trade, were forcibly removed from their families and communities to do service in Arab households, harems and armies.

Despite the long history of slavery in the Arab world and in other Muslim lands, little has been written about this human tragedy. Except for the few abolitionists, mainly in England, who railed against Arab slavery and put pressure upon Western governments to end the traffic in slaves, the issue has all but been ignored in the West. In contrast to the endless flow of books and articles that have enriched our understanding of slavery and the traffic in slaves from West Africa to the New World, the slavery that for centuries was an integral feature of Arab society has escaped the attention of Western scholars. Ignorance of Arab history or perhaps a bad conscience about the West's shameful record in this sordid business may help account for these vast gaps in Western historiography.

Something better might have been expected of Arab historians. Yet, here too, a conspiracy of silence has prevailed and has blocked out all light on this sensitive subject.⁸⁷⁹

Thus, in Gordon's view, the Arab slave trade is only unknown because it has been covered up, not because he is propounding a fallacy, throwing in figures and making wild statements about Muslim crimes, as his colleagues do so well.

In Gordon's view, Islam, of course, is to blame for slave trading:

'Arab writers and jurists, to the limited extent that they touched upon slavery, have done so with approval. No moral opprobrium has clung to slavery since it was sanctioned by the Koran and enjoyed an undisputed place in Arab society.'⁸⁸⁰

And, of course, in Gordon's view, if the Arabs abolished slave trading, it was due to Western pressure:

'The decision by Arab states to abolish slavery during this century was taken for reasons that had little to do with the moral aspects of the issue. Pressure from Western powers, the introduction of a money economy, and the realization that

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid; pp. ix-x.

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid; p. x.

maintaining slavery would forever bar Arab nations from entering the councils of international society provide a much better explanation for their announced policy. That slavery and the slave trade were inherently evil and therefore merited abolition were thoughts alien to Arab heads of state and their followers.⁸⁸¹

Then Gordon puts all these points together:

‘It is this failure to have consigned slavery to moral oblivion that explains why it endured so long in the Arab world. The perennial character of this social institution ultimately rested on religiously-inspired values - a point that few Arabs were prepared to challenge. And because slavery was never questioned from a moral standpoint, it should be no surprise that it still persists in Mauritania and in the Sudan....

Slavery and slave-raiding, which never really died out in the Sudan, have reappeared on a large scale in the disaffected southern region of the country which has been fighting off and on for autonomy against the Muslim-dominated North. In 1987, the head of International Catholic Mission confirmed reports of widespread slave-raiding in the southern Sudan that was being carried out by armed Arab militias... According to this source, as well as accounts by journalists and scholars, hundreds if not thousands of people have been carried off by slave traffickers. The great majority of the victims are children between the ages of eight and fourteen who are forced to march from their native lands to the North where they are sold into slavery.... Can it be merely a coincidence that the prime minister of the Sudan, who is committed to a policy of imposing Islamic Shari’a law on the country, is Sadek al-Mahdi, whose great-grandfather defeated the British a century ago and revived the slave trade?

To many Arabs, the issue of slavery is a source of discomfort. To speak out against it would be to impugn a tenet of Koranic law; to condone slavery would give offence to Africans whose ancestors and not-too-distant relatives in recent times fell victim to Arab slave traders and their agents. As a result, they instinctively keep silent on the subject, which to this day is a source of pain and humiliation for many Africans.⁸⁸²

⁸⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸⁸² Ibid; pp. x-xi.

Throughout his work, Gordon rants about the same points, his first chapter opening precisely as follows:

‘IT IS A CURIOUS TWIST TO THE STUDY OF THE SLAVE TRADE that historians have conducted their inquiries into this nefarious traffic from the perspectives of the Americas and the sugar islands of the Caribbeans. Almost irresistibly, their attention has been drawn to the transatlantic trade which, from the middle of the fifteenth century down to the third quarter of the 1800s, brought an estimated ten million blacks across the Atlantic Ocean to work the plantations and mines of the New World. It was this traffic in blacks from Africa’s West Coast, initiated by the Portuguese in 1441, that provided the labour that fuelled the rapid economic development of Brazil and the old American South; it made possible the growth of the plantations in Jamaica, Barbados, Hispaniola, St. Lucia, and the other islands in the Caribbean where sugar fortunes grew....

Yet, centuries before the first ship flying the flag of a European country slipped out from one of the numerous inlets along Africa’s West Coast laden with human cargo, the peoples of North Africa, Arabia, and the Persian Gulf were forcibly transferring large numbers of blacks down the Nile to Egypt and across the network of the vast Saharan trade routes from West and Central Africa to the countries of the Maghreb. And decades after the last slave ship sailed westward to the Americas and the West Indies, where slavery had been abolished by the early 1870s, Arab dhows were furtively moving out of Zanzibar, Mombasa, and other East African ports, following the familiar Indian Ocean routes for the consignment of “ebony.” The masters of these fast lateen-rigged ships, which were methodically packed in sardine-like fashion with men, women, and children, manoeuvred skilfully in evading the small force of British sloops charged with the impossible mission of interdicting this illicit traffic. The blacks caught up in this trade were fated to be sold in the slave marts of Arabia, the Persian Gulf, the Ottoman Empire, and India. Relatively little has been written about this facet of the slave trade. Although the number of blacks who fell victim to Muslim slave traders can never be determined, there is little doubt that the figures ran to several millions over the centuries that the traffic was carried on....

So thoroughly were many parts of the region combed by Arab slavers that whole areas were depopulated. Africa was exporting its human capital through other routes as well...⁸⁸³

Then, Gordon makes the following point:

‘Focusing on the Muslim-dominated trade could do very little to show the Europeans and Americans in a bad light. Except in certain instances, as when French and Portuguese merchants acquired slaves from Arab traders for their sugar plantations in the Mascarene Islands and Brazil, European slave traders had little to do with their Arabian counterparts. The Arab slave traders operated within fairly well-established commercial circuits which were oriented mainly to supplying the demands of Muslim countries. It was this vast market that provided the underpinnings of the slave trade in West, Central, and East Africa.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, the European maritime nations, led by England and gradually joined by others, used their power to curtail and finally end the Muslim traffic in slaves. This laudable objective, which was later merged with narrow colonial ambitions, prompted these powers to suppress slavery itself in Africa. British diplomacy, often backed by naval power, contributed much to getting Muslim leaders in Oman, Persia, Zanzibar, and the Ottoman Empire to put an end to slavery in these lands. As shall be seen, it took England the better part of the nineteenth century to rid the Indian Ocean of the traffic in slaves....

In the light of this, writing about the Muslim role in the slave trade could scarcely evoke bad memories about a Western tie to this trade. The trade was essentially a Muslim enterprise: Arabs hunted for slaves in the vast spaces of Africa or acquired them from middlemen to sell in the markets of the Muslim world. The existence of slavery in Muslim society, and by implication, the traffic in slaves, moreover, found sanction in the Koran and in the Sharia, the body of Islamic law.’⁸⁸⁴

Gordon devotes a whole chapter (Two) to the role of Islam in promoting slavery. He contrasts Islam with Christianity, and holds:

‘The weight of Islamic authority in a society where its writ ran far was sufficient to deaden any impulse to challenge slavery

⁸⁸³ Ibid; pp. 1-5.

⁸⁸⁴ Ibid; pp. 7-9.

on religious grounds. Unlike Western societies, which in their opposition to slavery spawned anti-slavery movements whose numbers and enthusiasm often grew out of church groups, no such grass-roots organisations ever developed in Muslim societies. Muslim countries never knew of dissenting religious groups as the Methodists, Unitarians, and Quakers of eighteenth-century England who railed against the Church of England for finding virtue in slavery. In Muslim politics, the state unquestioningly accepted the teachings of Islam and applied them as law. And lest it be lost sight of, Islam, by sanctioning slavery, however mild a form it generally took, also extended legitimacy to the nefarious traffic in slaves.⁸⁸⁵

Gordon's views are shared by an increasing number of Western writers. Quite recently, Cox and Marks, relying on certain sources (Bernard Lewis, P. Crone, Morgan (just cited), publications by the London Bible College, etc), give us the following picture:⁸⁸⁶

'Slavery has been associated with some Islamic societies for at least a thousand years and continues to be so into the twenty first century.⁸⁸⁷ The case of Sudan is particularly well documented.⁸⁸⁸ ... Moreover there is ample evidence of the existence of slavery and slave trades with Islam, with major growth taking place in the 18th and 19th centuries: 'The trans-Saharan slave trade increased in volume during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Ottoman rulers in league with Muslim Bornu transported large numbers of slaves across the Sahara into the Ottoman Empire. Many eyewitness accounts talk of substantial loss of lives during the raids and journeys into servitude.'⁸⁸⁹

There is some evidence that the scale of the intra-African slave trade is substantially greater in total than that of the Atlantic slave trade which peaked in the eighteenth century and was gradually abolished from the early nineteenth century onwards.

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid; p. 21.

⁸⁸⁶ C. Cox-J. Marks: *The West, Islam*; op cit; pp. 39-41.

⁸⁸⁷ See: B. Lewis: *Race and Slavery in the Middle East, an Historical Enquiry*; (New York and Oxford University Press; 1990); S. Marmon ed: *Slavery in the Islamic Middle East*; Markus Wiener; (Princeton; 1999); P. Crone: *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*; (Cambridge University Press; 1980).

⁸⁸⁸ C. Cox-J. Marks: *The West, Islam*; op cit; appendix.

⁸⁸⁹ J. Azumah: *Islam and Slavery*; *Centre for Islamic Studies*; (London Bible College; 1999); p. 3. See also J. Azumah: *The Legacy of Arab Islam in Africa*; (Oneworld Publication; 2001).

Apart from the high loss of lives during the raids and journeys, conservative estimates suggest that between 11 and 14 million Africans were transported into Muslim lands.⁸⁹⁰ Yet the number of studies which have been made of the intra-African slave trade is minute in comparison to the voluminous discussion of the Atlantic slave trade.⁸⁹¹ Where slavery has been abolished or diminished in Islamic societies this has almost always been at the instigation of or under pressure from colonial European powers:

‘The anti-slavery measures of European colonial powers were generally viewed by Muslims not only as a threat to their very livelihood but also an affront to their religion... Muslims therefore resisted all abolition efforts and chattel slavery persists in Muslim countries today.’⁸⁹²

.... ‘Finally in discussing slavery it is worth remembering that: It was Europe.... that first decided to set the slaves free: at home, then in the Colonies, and finally in all the world. Western technology made slavery unnecessary; Western ideas made it intolerable.’⁸⁹³

Having considered the Western propaganda on Muslim slave trading, let’s now consider the reality.

b. Fallacies Uncovered: Islam and Slavery:

Islam, as a faith, fought slavery more than any faith ever did. The Prophet (PBUH) is reported to have said: ‘The worst of men is the seller of men.’⁸⁹⁴ Captives, if they became Muslims, were set free; and if they retained their own faith, they were, as Prophet Mohammed told the followers of Islam, nonetheless their brethren.⁸⁹⁵ The master who treated them kindly would be acceptable to God; he who abused his

⁸⁹⁰ M. Gordon: *Slavery in the Arab World*; op cit; p. ix.

⁸⁹¹ H. Thomas: *The Slave Trade; The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870*; (Simon and Shuster; 1997), and sources cited herein.

⁸⁹² J. Azumah: *Islam and Slavery*; op cit; p. 5.

⁸⁹³ B. Lewis: *Cultures in Conflict*; (Oxford University Press; 1995); p. 72.

⁸⁹⁴ R.B. Smith: *Mohammed*; op cit; p. 330.

⁸⁹⁵ *Ibid*; p. 244.

power would be shut out of Paradise.⁸⁹⁶ And the Muslim master who chastised his slave without cause was bound to set him free.⁸⁹⁷ As Segal points out:

‘To a degree unmatched by the various states of Western Christendom, for all the conflict between Protestants and Catholic, the nature of society in Islam was informed by reference to the Divine will, as communicated by the Qur’an. And the Qur’an dealt in some detail with slaves. That pretensions to piety might co-exist with disregard for the spirit and even the letter of such details did not preclude their overall influence. Slaves were to be regarded and treated as people, not simply as possessions.’⁸⁹⁸

Segal adds:

‘The treatment of slaves in Islam was overall more benign, in part because the values and attitudes promoted by religion inhibited the very development of Western-style capitalism, with its subjugation of people to the priority of profit.... In short, far from pursuing the development of an economic system that promoted the depersonalisation of slave labour, Islamic influence was responsible for impeding it.’⁸⁹⁹

It was also Islam, Rodinson points out, which became the defender of the oppressed people of Africa.⁹⁰⁰ In Blyden’s words:

‘The introduction of Islam into Central and Western Africa has been the most important, if not the sole, preservative against the desolation of the slave trade. Mohammedanism furnished a protection to the tribes who embraced it by effectually binding them together in one strong religious fraternity, and enabling them by their united effort to baffle the attempts of powerful pagan slave hunters. Enjoying this comparative immunity from sudden hostile incursions, industry was stimulated among them, industry diminished their poverty; and as they increased in worldly substance, they also increased in desire for knowledge. Gross superstition gradually disappeared from among them... they acquired loftier views, wider tastes, and

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid; p. 245.

⁸⁹⁸ R. Segal: *Islam’s Black Slaves*; (Atlantic Books; London; 2001); p. 5.

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid; pp. 5; 6.

⁹⁰⁰ Louis Massignon: *l’Influence de l’Islam au Moyen Age sur la formation de l’essor des banques Juives*; *Bulletin d’Etudes Orientales* (Institut Fr de Damas) Vol 1; year 1931; pp 3-12. p.12.

those energetic habits which so pleasantly distinguished them from their pagan neighbours.⁹⁰¹

The Muslims surely, during conflict, in particular, took slaves; yet the crucial difference with Westerners was in the treatment of slaves. There is nothing (except in Western Christian writing, fiction and missionary witness accounts) in the whole history of Islam which compares to the Western inhumanity in the treatment of slaves, in plantations or in mines, making them toil to their death, or skinning or mutilating them, or burning them on stakes for dissent or for the crime of escape.⁹⁰² Islam never enslaved one hundred million Africans, nor did it ruin Africa.⁹⁰³ The Atlantic Slave Trade between America, Europe and Africa, did.⁹⁰⁴

More importantly, in Islam, the emancipated slave is actually, as well as potentially, equal to a free-born citizen. Throughout the Turkish Empire, for instance, and at all periods in its history, slaves have risen repeatedly to the highest offices and have never been ashamed of their origins.⁹⁰⁵ The Frenchman, About, notes how sultans of Constantinople and venerated chiefs of Islam are born to female slaves, and they are very proud.⁹⁰⁶ Captain Burton mentions that the Pacha of the Syrian caravan with which he travelled to Damascus had been the slave of a slave.⁹⁰⁷ Sebuktegin, the father of Mahmud, the founder of the Ghaznavid dynasty (10th-11th century,) was a slave; so was Qutb-ud-din, the conqueror and first king of Delhi, and the true founder, therefore, of Muslim India.⁹⁰⁸ Often, again, a great lord of Egypt raises, teaches and grooms a slave child, whom he marries later to his daughter, and gives him full rights; and we come across in Cairo stories of ministers, generals, and magistrates of the highest order who were worth from a thousand to a thousand and a half francs in their early youth.⁹⁰⁹ A dynasty of slaves, the Mamluks, ruled Egypt from 1250 until 1798, and it is said that Christians from the Caucasus were glad to be carried off as slaves to Egypt because each one felt that he might rise to be

⁹⁰¹ Blyden: *Islam and Race Distinction*, in N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe and Empire*; op cit; p. 313.

⁹⁰² See, for instance, R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit.

⁹⁰³ Ibid; p.275.

⁹⁰⁴ E. Williams: *Capitalism and Slavery*; (North Carolina; 1944).

⁹⁰⁵ R. B. Smith: *Mohammed*; op cit; p. 250.

⁹⁰⁶ G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation des Arabes*, op cit; p.293.

⁹⁰⁷ Burton: *Pilgrimage*, I.p.89 in R. B. Smith: *Mohammed*; p. 251; note 1.

⁹⁰⁸ See Elphinstone's *India*; p. 320; 363; 370; in R. B. Smith: *Mohammed*; p. 251.

⁹⁰⁹ G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation des Arabes*, op cit; p.293.

sultan.⁹¹⁰ Some Mamluk rulers such as Baybars and Qala'un occupy places of the first rank in Muslim history, which seems to follow a tradition centuries old. In the 9th century, Ibn Tulun, another slave of Turkish origin rose to the position of governor of Egypt. Many slaves of Slav origin were the highest serving ministers of the last Ummayyad Caliph Marwan II in Damascus (744-50).⁹¹¹ One of the most remarkable of Caliph Muawiya's lieutenants was Zayyad 'the son of his father' (of unknown father). He became governor of both Kufa and Basra.⁹¹² Zayyad, the son of his father, it was who took Bukhara for Islam.⁹¹³ Under the subsequent Abbasid dynasty, only three caliphs were born of free mothers, and all these belong to the eighth century.⁹¹⁴ In Andalusia, the Maghreb, and Sicily, many former slaves could be found in the army, administration, and arts.⁹¹⁵

Finally, if the Muslims had treated the Black Africans as badly as Western apologists state, one would ask then: what made and still makes these Africans cling to the faith of their oppressors when no Muslim army ever set foot in the Black African continent?

b. Slavery Under Western Christendom:

There is no need here to unearth the dark pages of the Western slave trade beyond few points to make the argument. This is not because this author is too cowardly to avoid matters which might anger the Western readership or opinion, and cause him difficulties of diverse sorts. These issues are too vast to address in a work which seeks to remain succinct. More importantly, it is the policy of this author to address the dark pages of history, and show the cruelties of the Western Christian past, without, however, dwelling on them. Should anyone seek to unearth the dark pages of Western Christendom, whole volumes would become necessary. This is not necessary to make the argument. Searching for

⁹¹⁰ J.J. Dollinger; p. 32 in R. B. Smith: *Mohammed*; op cit; p. 250.

⁹¹¹ M. Esperonnier: Les Echanges commerciaux entre le Monde Musulman et les pays Slaves d'après les sources Musulmanes medievales pp 17-27; *Cahiers de Civilisation Medievale* vol 23, p.26.

⁹¹² J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p.70

⁹¹³ Ibid.

⁹¹⁴ G.E. Von Grunebaum: *Medieval Islam*, op cit; p.202

⁹¹⁵ M. Esperonnier: les Echanges commerciaux; op cit; p.26.

truth is one thing; unnecessarily condemning one culture is wrong, especially when one is deeply offended by the sweeping condemnations of one's own faith and culture. What is important, hence, is to fight the lies of modern Western historians who have cleaned their history of its dark deeds, and have attributed all such evils to Islam. The following explains this.

First, in contrast to Islam, in Christendom, there is not one single example of any former slave, especially black, ever reaching any position of power or influence, or acquiring any sort of status. Muslim history, as shown above, is full of such examples of black people, or former slaves who reached high status, governorship, and even the sultanate and caliphate. Any reader, however limited in their competence and learning, is invited to browse through history and check this fact.

In relation to the attitude to slavery, it is first necessary to address the Western Christian 'intellectual' 'ideological' view of slavery. It is a Christian Saint, Thomas of Aquinas, who justifies the ideology of slavery.⁹¹⁶ He was as charitable as a man can be, Sarton notes,

'Yet even the fact that a slave has an immortal soul did not alter in his eyes the essential nature of slavery: a slave was a piece of property like any other, which could not be alienated without the owner's consent.'⁹¹⁷

In the later Middle Ages, when the Christian West began to invade other continents and to subjugate and enslave their people en masse, thousands upon thousands of Native Americans were baptised, and then sent to the life in death of slavery - to the consuming pestilence of the plantation and the mine.⁹¹⁸ Slavery, it was held, was only in the external way, but inside they were free men, because they were freed from paganism, although animals were treated better than humans.⁹¹⁹ The Church even endeavoured 'to salvage the soul of slaves, for eternity,' by

⁹¹⁶G. Sarton: *Introduction to the History of Science*; 3 vols; (The Carnegie Institute of Washington; 1927-48); Vol II, p. 799.

⁹¹⁷Ibid.

⁹¹⁸W. Howitt: *Colonisation*; op cit; p. 120.

⁹¹⁹BBC2 29 April 2000: Brazil an inconvenient history.

slaying them en masse after converting them to Christianity.⁹²⁰ Tens of millions of Native Americans were thus slain.⁹²¹

Africa was to play a central role in the slave trade, and the Church was central to this trade. Bishop Bartholome da Las Casas (1474-1566) first priest to be ordained in the New World (1512) exploited slave Indians at Hispaniola (Haiti),⁹²² and just like other religious humanists preached African slavery.⁹²³ In memorials of 1516; 1518; and 1542, Las Casas recommended the use of African slaves to Espanola to mitigate Native Indian suffering and also to solve the labour crisis.⁹²⁴ It was obvious that native Americans and African slaves suffered greatly, and death ravaged both peoples, yet the trade was preached by religious humanists.⁹²⁵ Fellow Dominican, Pedro de Cordoba (1516), the Jeronymite friars (1518), the Franciscan Pedro Mexica (1518) also urged the introduction of African slavery.⁹²⁶ As the Native Americans were cleared out, the Africans were made to toil.⁹²⁷ Africa, 'the cradle of the accursed race of Ham,' was a reservoir which could be drawn on without qualms.⁹²⁸ According to the current way of thinking,

'Noah's curse and the collective apostasy of Africans made it almost a duty for Europe to take slaves, since reduction to slavery was seen as a first and necessary stage in their conversion and ultimate salvation.'⁹²⁹

Just as with native Americans the Church sought to salvage the soul of Black Africans for eternity. We are assured by their own authors, notes Howitt, that the moment after they had baptised numbers of these creatures, they cut their throats that they might prevent all possibility of a relapse, and 'sent them straight to heaven.'⁹³⁰ As Fontana outlines, in the century of mass slave trading, the 18th, enlightened Western

⁹²⁰ Pedro de Leturia: *Origen Historico del Patronato de Indias*, in *Relaciones entre la Santa Sede e HispanoAmerica*. *Analecta Gregoriana*, Cl. (Roma, 1959), p. 3-31 in D. M. Traboulay: *Columbus and Las Casas*; (University Press of America, New York, London, 1994); p. viii.

⁹²¹ See D.E. Stannard: *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*; (New York; Oxford University Press; 1992).

⁹²² R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit; p.256.

⁹²³ D.M. Traboulay: *Columbus and Las Casas*; op cit; p. 58.

⁹²⁴ Ibid.

⁹²⁵ Ibid.

⁹²⁶ Ibid.

⁹²⁷ R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit; p.257.

⁹²⁸ P. Chaunu: *European*; op cit; p.298.

⁹²⁹ Ibid.

⁹³⁰ W. Howitt: *Colonisation*; op cit; p. 120.

views saw the slave trade with great favour. 'Whenever there is an effort to legitimise over-lordship,' says Fontana,

'There appear theories which demonstrate that those overlorded are inferior. What the Castilian theologians did for the subjection of the native Americans, the French philosophers of the eighteenth century did for the subjugation of the Black slaves. Voltaire insisted that the intelligence of the Black people 'is of a different kind from our understanding, it is very inferior.'⁹³¹ Montesquieu was still more direct. This man who wrote that 'slavery goes against the natural order according to which all men are born free and independent' went on to defend the enslavement of Negroes on the ground that their soul was corrupted by their colour.⁹³²

The apparent illogicality of this has a key provided by a practical argument: 'Sugar would be excessively dear, were it not that the plant producing it is made to work by slave labour.'⁹³³

To erase the horrific ordeal of the Black Africans at the hands of their white slave masters from knowledge is one of the generalised crimes committed by modern writers on the question. Setting aside the fact that countless millions of Africans were killed during capture and the hunt for slaves, the life and fate of African slaves is a succession of horrors. In the pursuit of the trade, Le Bon says, English skippers used to lure Africans by shows of friendship, then swoop on them, cut off their heads and exchange them for a number of slaves with rival tribal leaders.⁹³⁴ During ocean transportation, to maximise profit, Africans were stacked in the manner as shown in the often reproduced deck plan of the English slave-ship *Brookes* in 1783, where the slaves were stacked 'like books on a shelf,'⁹³⁵ as is well illustrated in Garaudy's book.⁹³⁶ Death rates reached between 15 and 30 per hundred.⁹³⁷ Once they reached lands of their destinations, the slaves were separated from their families. Hence the social fabric of their community was completely shattered. Then, they were made to toil in fields and mines, often to death. All slaves were locked in huts under such conditions that scores

⁹³¹ Voltaire: *Essai sur les Moeurs et l'esprit des Nations*; Ch. 141.

⁹³² Montesquieu: *Mes Pensees*; 1935; and *De l'Esprit des lois*; XV; 5.

⁹³³ J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*; (Blackwell; Oxford; 1995); p. 123.

⁹³⁴ In G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation*; op cit; p. 468.

⁹³⁵ F. Fernandez-Armesto: *Millennium*; A Touchstone Book; (Simon and Shuster; New York; 1995); p. 273.

⁹³⁶ R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit; p. 275.

⁹³⁷ Ibid.

were found hanged in their wretched quarters.⁹³⁸ African dissent was dealt with as described here by Gabriel Stedman, who went to Surinam in 1771 to help suppress one of many slave revolts there,⁹³⁹ quoting a white colonist who described the torture-execution of a slave:

"Not long ago," this colonist told Stedman, "I saw a black man hanged alive by the ribs, between which with a knife was first made an incision, and then clinched an Iron hook with a chain. In this manner, he kept living three days, hanging with head and feet downwards and catching with his tongue the drops of water, it being the rainy season, that were flowing down his bloated breast, while the vultures were picking in the putrid wound."⁹⁴⁰

In the end, the African slave trade may have resulted in 10 million Africans shipped to America, but the counts tell of ten dead for one slave alive.⁹⁴¹ In total, it is a hundred million people killed as a result of the slave trade.⁹⁴²

As Armesto points out:

'Our traditional images of the horrors of the middle passage and the degradation of life in slave communities derive from slaves' memoirs and abolitionist tracts. Sceptics have wondered whether shippers can have been so careless of their cargo as to tolerate - and even invite - heavy losses of life en route; yet evidence such as the often reproduced deck plan of the slave-ship *Brookes* in 1783, where the slaves were stacked 'like books on a shelf,' or the tell tale case of the Liverpool captain in 1781 who had 130 slaves thrown overboard for the insurance confirm the horror stories of the slaves who survived. Some shippers had more rational policies for the protection of their investments, but the extent of both inhumanity and inefficiency in the trade are enough to shock moralists and pragmatists alike.'⁹⁴³

⁹³⁸ U. Bitterli: *Cultures in Conflict*; Polity Press; tr. from German; (Cambridge; 1989); p. 40.

⁹³⁹ John Gabriel Stedman: *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*; (London; 1813).

⁹⁴⁰ In T. Morganthau: *Slavery: How It Built the New World*; in *Newsweek*; Special Issue, Fall/Winter 1991, pp. 66-69.

⁹⁴¹ R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit; p.251.

⁹⁴² Ibid.

⁹⁴³ F. Fernandez-Armesto: *Millennium*; op cit; p. 273.

If the history of the slave trade is to be further corrected, slavery, as Garaudy points out, was abolished in America neither by revolution nor by devout Christians.⁹⁴⁴ White House papers also show that 'Honest' Lincoln did not start the war intending to free America's 3.5 million slaves.⁹⁴⁵ By modern standards he was racist, claiming in private that black people were 'morally inferior.' He wanted to 'pack them all back to Africa where they will not cause us any more problems.'⁹⁴⁶

Behind the abolition of slavery was industrialisation, and the plantations becoming no longer profitable; the huge Black labour force now becoming a burden rather than the asset it had been in the 18th century. Williams shows the correlation between the fall of the contribution of slavery to the economy and the ease by which slavery was abolished.⁹⁴⁷

Williams asserts that slavery was part of the capitalist system, which at some point in the 19th century lost its reason for existence; thus somehow dying on its own.⁹⁴⁸ Before Williams, L.J. Ragatz⁹⁴⁹ had reached the same conclusions.⁹⁵⁰ Williams' demonstration constituted a stark reminder of reality and truth. Thus, it is not surprising that he has had to face intense criticism to our day.⁹⁵¹

As for the notion that the West owes its wealth to the industrial revolution of the 18th-19th century, this is false. It was industrial exploitation of the Africans, which created Western wealth. 300,000 Africans were enslaved every year in the 18th century, the age of the supposed Industrial Revolution.⁹⁵² It ought to be known that the development of the plantation economies provided Europe with great quantities of tobacco, coffee, sugar and cotton at prices within the reach of ordinary consumers - and which stimulated trade out of which modern economic growth has arisen.⁹⁵³ Malachy Postlethwayt, the British mercantilist, wrote that the slave trade was the 'first principle and foundation of all the rest, the mainspring of the machine which sets

⁹⁴⁴ R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit; p.277.

⁹⁴⁵ Sunday Times March 18, 2001.

⁹⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁷ E. Williams: *Capitalism and Slavery*; (North Carolina; 1944).

⁹⁴⁸ S. Drescher: *Le Declin du systeme esclavagiste Britanique et l'abolition de la traite*; in *Annales* Vol 31 (1976); pp 414-35; p.414.

⁹⁴⁹ L. J. Ragatz: *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British West-Indies, 1763-1833*; (New York, 1928).

⁹⁵⁰ S. Drescher: *Le Declin du systeme esclavagiste Britanique*; op cit; p.414

⁹⁵¹ Ibid.

⁹⁵² R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit; p.275.

⁹⁵³ J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*; op cit; p. 123.

every wheel in motion.⁹⁵⁴ Such were the huge profits from the trade, manufacturers, provisioners and sailors all benefited by the trade and petitioned for its continuance.⁹⁵⁵

As it enriched the West, the Atlantic slave trade resulted in the genocide of around 100 million Africans.⁹⁵⁶ No re-writing of history can deny this fact.

⁹⁵⁴ M. Craton: *Sinews of Empire: A Short History of British Slavery*; Garden City; NY; (Doubleday. 1974); p. 120.

⁹⁵⁵ E.R. Wolf: *Europe and the People Without History*; (University of California Press; Berkeley; 1982); p.198.

⁹⁵⁶ R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit; p.275.

3. The Muslim as 'a Racist'

It is again common to find that the Muslim, the Arab in particular, is depicted as a racist, inflicting terrible woes on the Black African, thus forcing the Western Christian to intervene to save the Black African from this Arab-Muslim racism. The recent tragic instance of Darfur in the Sudan is one instance seized by modern rhetoric to bombard opinion, daily, about Arab cruelties towards Black Africans, their mass killings, mass rape, and countless other crimes. This sudden Western care for Darfur sets aside the fact that the murdered and raped people of Darfur are Muslims, but uses and twists the reality of the tragedy to highlight instead Arab-Muslim racism towards the Black Africans. Under the large title stretching on two pages: 'We're on the brink of a massive catastrophe, warns diplomat', the daily, *The Independent*, highlights in large sub-title on page three: 'They want to kill us because we are black.'⁹⁵⁷

Darfur has occupied the attention of the Western media for much of the new millennium. It has served to fuel the existing views of Muslim-Arab racism towards Black Africans.

Gordon, once more, tells us about 'Arab-Muslim racism':

'As white slaves became scarcer, however, they became a luxury in which only the wealthiest could indulge themselves. In time, the multiracial character of slavery in the Arab world virtually ceased to exist and became almost exclusively black. In this respect, it differed little from slavery in the New World. The association in the Arab mind of black people with slavery can be seen in the language itself... In time, the word '*abd*' lost its exclusive meaning and came to mean a black person regardless whether he was slave or free. This semantic evolution of the word '*abd*' from a social to ethnic designation undoubtedly derived from the popular image of the black person in Arab history as a slave.

As long as slavery maintained a multiracial cast, Arab and Turkish slave owners favoured white slaves over blacks in so far as work assignments and what might be called career prospects were concerned. White slave girls were preferred as

⁹⁵⁷ *The Independent* 16 September 06; p. 3.

concubines over black girls; and among the latter, the fairer-complexioned Abyssinians were shown partiality over their dark-skinned African sisters.

This order of racial preference is captured in a number of paintings of the *harem* by an assortment of Western artists who portray the white slave woman as the central figure in the secluded quarter.⁹⁵⁸

Gordon then adds:

‘The negative attitudes displayed by Arabs towards blacks were rooted in feelings of racial prejudice and cultural superiority....

It was the view of many Muslim scholars that the social behaviour and physical characteristics of people inhabiting lands of extreme temperatures were adversely affected by these climatic conditions.’ (Gordon cites as support for this assertion the ninth century Muslim scholar, Al-Jahiz,) who says:

“If the country is cold, they are undercooked in the womb; if the country is hot, they are burnt in the womb.”⁹⁵⁹

Gordon concludes:

‘Racist views expressed by Arab scholars tapped a deep root in public attitudes towards blacks. Indeed, given the widespread existence of slavery in the Arab world over so many centuries, it would have been surprising that such feelings did not exist.’⁹⁶⁰

Also accusing the Muslims of racism, but for the very opposite reasons from Gordon, Stoddard tells us:

‘The European in the Orient is disliked not merely as a ruler and as a disturber, but also as a man of widely different race. This matter of race is very complicated but it cuts deep and is of a fundamental importance. Most of the peoples of the Near and Middle East belong to what is known as the ‘brown’ category of the human species.’⁹⁶¹

If we are to conclude from Gordon’s and Stoddard’s lines, on one hand Muslims hate those of dark skin (according to Gordon), then on the other they hate those of fair skin because they (the Muslims) are

⁹⁵⁸ Ibid; pp. 98-9.

⁹⁵⁹ Ibid; p. 100.

⁹⁶⁰ Ibid; p. 102.

⁹⁶¹ L. Stoddard: *The New World of Islam*; op cit; p. 102.

themselves of dark skin (according to Stoddard). This is one of the many contradictions we find in Western writings on Islam and Muslims, contradictory because fundamentally they are based on fallacies. The following refutes the arguments of Muslim racism further.

A Comparative Look at Race under Islam and the Christian West:

The first point to be made is that Gordon, like nearly all those who attack Islam and Muslims, in relation to this particular matter of race as in others, seize on the few instances they can find amongst some Muslims committing a misdeed, or holding some evil views, to generalise them to the whole of the community. This is an attitude which is unique to the West, whether when they accused the Native Americans of cannibalism, or the Muslims of killing Spanish Christians, or in respect to today's association of terror with the Muslims. They always seize on some individual acts and words, and then label the whole community with the crime. Muslims, on the other hand, have always made the difference between the guilty crusader and the rest of the Christians, between the perpetrator of the massacres of Palestinians of Sabra and Chatilla and the rest of the Christians, between the colonialists and the rest of the Westerners, etc. This is not the case as a general rule for Western Christian writers and opinion makers. In their minds and writings, one misdeed suffices to tarnish the other's whole community. One Muslim commits a heinous crime and such a crime is automatically related to the faith and community, and all that we hear and read then is of Islamic terror/Muslim violence, cruelty, mistreatment of women, etc. The same applies to this issue of racism, whereby Gordon and the similarly-minded multitude of propagandists use some lines or words, or isolated incidents, to label Muslims with racism, when they, as Gordon himself admits, know that Islam is not a racist faith.⁹⁶²

One, of course, understands the motivations of those ranting about Arab-Muslim racism. By insisting on Arab-Muslim racism and cruelties, today as in the past, the Christian West seeks to present itself

⁹⁶² M. Gordon: *Slavery in the Arab World*; op cit; p. 99.

as most caring, and thus indirectly cleans its own record towards the Black Africans, which is countless times worse than anything the Muslims could ever inflict on Black Africans. This sudden care is also the continuation of the technique of contrasting the image of the caring West with the bestial Muslim world, which is also found in relation to women, for instance, whereby Muslim bestiality towards women is contrasted with Western humanity. By highlighting Arab-Muslim crimes towards the Blacks, the aim is also to divert attention away from the crimes of which Arabs and Muslims are victims daily at the hands of Western coalitions. The present hysteria insisting on Muslim racism is furthermore, and most importantly, a lie. And the best way to refute the notion of Muslims racism remains by comparing like with the like, looking at reality past and present.

a. Race under Islam:

As Segal notes, for much of Islamic history, there was no such virtually exclusive identification of slavery with blackness as came to exist in the Christian West.⁹⁶³ He says:

‘Such (Islamic) influence also successfully confronted the emergence of racism as a form of institutionalised discrimination, because the Qur’an expressly condemned racism along with tribalism and nationalism.’⁹⁶⁴

As Lloyd writes:

‘Any comparison between white slavery in the Regencies of Barbary and Negro slavery as it existed in the Americas is mistaken. The colour bar was a psychological factor of great importance in the treatment of Negro slaves. In Barbary there was no such prejudice, nor was there any racial distinction made in the multi-lingual slave population. There was, of course, a strong religious feeling against Christians, although there was a remarkable degree of tolerance of religious practices, ranging from extreme Protestant to Orthodox Greek, shown in the building of chapels in the slave quarters and in the treatment of visiting priests. With the comparatively large number of renegades involved, there was ample opportunity to rise above slave status if apostasy was accepted. Who ever

⁹⁶³ R. Segal: *Islam’s Black Slaves*; op cit; p. 49.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid; pp. 5; 6.

heard of a Negro slave owning a plantation as so many European slaves owned ships? Nor was slavery necessarily life-long, because there was always a chance of ransom or redemption. Indeed, as has already been remarked, slavery is not really the right word for the captives or unofficial prisoners of war who were held in Barbary.⁹⁶⁵

On Islam's view of races, it can safely be said that no faith can show an equal sense of brotherhood between diverse colours. There is no need to dwell on all the well-known points of how the Islamic text states that difference between humans is in terms of their deeds but not of the colour of their skin; or that the first caller to prayer in Islam was black.. It is worth quoting Malcom X, who says:

'The colour-blindness of the Muslim world's religious society and the colour blindness of the Muslim human society: these two influences had each been making a greater impact, and an increasing persuasion against my former way of thinking.' In Mecca there were 'no segregationists - no liberals'; indifference to colour was spontaneous, and for Malcom X this was evidently a shattering experience: 'I shared true, brotherly love with many white-complexioned Muslims who never gave a thought to the race, or to the complexion, of another Muslim.'⁹⁶⁶

This absence of Muslim prejudice towards coloured people struck Lady A. Blunt, who in her trip to the Nedjed region (1878), states that the governor of one of the largest cities of the region, Meskakeh, was 'a Negro completely black, with the repulsive features of the African.'⁹⁶⁷ She added:

'It seemed to me absurd to see that Negro, who was still a slave, in the midst of a group of courtesans of the white race, because those Arabs, many of whom were of noble origins by blood, bent in front of him, ready to obey any of his glances, or to laugh at any of his poor jokes.'⁹⁶⁸

And this egalitarian attitude in Islamic society is not a recent manifestation by Muslims seeking to correct their dreadful past by pretending to accept the other. Instead, Islamic colour blindness goes back to the early days of its history. Islam never saw 'the others' as

⁹⁶⁵ C. Lloyd: *English Corsairs on the Barbary Coast*; op cit; p. 112.

⁹⁶⁶ N. Daniel: *The Cultural Barrier*, op cit; p. 11.

⁹⁶⁷ G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation des Arabes*, op cit; p.31.

⁹⁶⁸ Ibid; p.31.

inferior, alien beings. 'Arab customs,' wrote Rodinson, 'admitted and favoured the adoption by the clans of people of all sorts and all origins who thus became entirely Arabs. The flow of conversions slowly swelled and then became irresistible.'⁹⁶⁹

Remarkably, Van Ess points out, Islamic countries have never had classes or a nobility in the Western sense.⁹⁷⁰ The ideal of *limpieza de sangre* (Purity of Blood), so familiar to us from *Don Quixote*, did not survive the first century of Islamic history. Islam is basically egalitarian.⁹⁷¹ In contrast to Roman and medieval law, Islamic law has no category of persons for whom separate regulations were in force.⁹⁷² Medieval Islamic society was relatively fluid. Under Muslim rule the offspring of a believer and a Christian captive was not just legitimate, but most of all was not stigmatised.⁹⁷³

Neither was a person stigmatised for their colour. To the contrary, whether in 10th century Morocco, or today, says Levi Provençal, there is no lack of coloured people in the ranks of aristocracy, or the bourgeoisie; the great merit of Muslim culture is that colour- prejudice has never existed, whether in the Middle Ages or today.⁹⁷⁴ Van Ess insists that racial differences have never played the sort of role in Islam that they have in Christianity. Minor forms of discrimination erupted at times, but Islam has never known deliberate racism, which is one of the reasons, Van Ess identifies, why it succeeded in Africa more than Christianity.⁹⁷⁵ Likewise Segal notes how, unlike in Christendom, slaves in Islam were not subject to special racial discrimination in law, and once freed, they enjoyed in law equal rights as citizens.⁹⁷⁶ Levi Provençal gives a good illustration of this richness of Muslim society:

'Travellers to the Spanish Peninsula without a doubt did not feel too much strangers in a milieu where Arabism was eminent, where oriental culture remained dominant, where the language of the Qur'an ruled over local dialects, but it was nonetheless striking to see side by side in the roads and in the Bazaars of towns and cities populations so little uniform: blond, brown, half-cast, whites and black, talking in

⁹⁶⁹ M Rodinson: *Mahomet*, (Le Seuil, Paris, 1961), in Y. Courbage, P. Fargues: *Chrétiens*; op cit; p.47.

⁹⁷⁰ Joseph Van Ess: *Islamic Perspectives*; in H. Kung et al: *Christianity*; op cit; p.80.

⁹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷² *Ibid.*

⁹⁷³ A. Lowe: *The Barrier and the Bridge*, (G. Bles; London; 1972); p. 79.

⁹⁷⁴ E. Levi Provençal: *Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane*; Vol III; op cit; p.178

⁹⁷⁵ Joseph van Ess: *Islamic perspectives*; op cit; p.80.

⁹⁷⁶ R. Segal: *Islam's Black Slaves*; op cit; p. 9.

Romanesque and in Arabic, living in such perfect symbiosis, together, alongside Christians and Jews, they, too, always loyal subjects of the regime.⁹⁷⁷

The monk Theodosius, in 883, acknowledged the grandeur of Palermo (in Sicily) (then under Muslim rule) describing it as

"Full of citizens and strangers, so that there seem to be collected there all the Saracen folk from East to West and from North to South . . . Blended with the Sicilians, the Greeks, the Lombards and the Jews, there are Arabs, Berbers, Persians, Tartars, Negroes, some wrapped in long robes and turbans, some clad in skins and some half naked; faces oval, square, or round, of every complexion and profile, beards and hair of every variety of colour or cut."⁹⁷⁸

Even more, as Segal notes, there were black slaves in Islam who rose to positions of power without parallel among their counterparts in the West, even a few who became rulers.⁹⁷⁹ Many of these have already been cited in the previous heading, and include many caliphs, generals, and regional governors. Amongst the many rulers of black origin that can be cited is Mulay Ismail, the second Alawid Sultan (1672-1727), who was himself the son of a black concubine.⁹⁸⁰

b. Race under Western Christendom:

Segal explains that whilst some Christians played a part in the abolition of slavery, it is doubtful they would have succeeded without support from industrial capitalists.

'The workshop of the world had outgrown the value of slave labour colonies.... By the time this combination of moral and economic campaigns captured the state, so that British financial, diplomatic, and naval power came to be deployed in their cause, the days of the Atlantic slave trade and then of slavery itself in the West were numbered.

Yet racism vigorously survived the end of slavery. If old habits die hard, racism would already have been old enough to take an unconscionable time dying. But there were reasons why it

⁹⁷⁷ E. Levi Provencal: *Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane*; op cit; p.186.

⁹⁷⁸ In C. Waern: *Medieval Sicily*; (Duckworth and Co; London; 1910); p. 19.

⁹⁷⁹ R. Segal: *Islam's Black Slaves*; op cit; p. 9.

⁹⁸⁰ *Ibid*; p. 55.

thrived rather than declined. The colonial powers engaged in extending their rule across most of the world, found a pretext in the concept of the 'White man's burden,' with its corresponding presumption of the cultural and even biological inferiority of blacks and other colours.'⁹⁸¹

This view of the Blacks (and the Indians) belonging to inferior races dates from before the imperial age. Identifying Black people and other natives of Africa and America with wild animals to justify their subjugation was predominant amongst the early learned Western men such as Petrarch,⁹⁸² Lull,⁹⁸³ or Zurara, who, for instance, holds that the Blacks, in the previous generation, seemed drawn from bestiality'.⁹⁸⁴ *Le Canarien*, the 15th century Catholic organ for The Canaries, tells us that 'the natives 'are miscreants and do not acknowledge their creator and live in part like beasts'.⁹⁸⁵ In modern 'Renaissance' writing, the Blacks were readily classified in a category not far removed from that of the apes, as men made degenerate by sin.⁹⁸⁶ 'In part, this was because of the tradition that the sons of Ham were cursed with blackness, as well as being condemned to slavery; in part through the mental associations evoked by a 'diabolical' colour, generally preferred for the depiction of demons and the signifying of sin.'⁹⁸⁷ Comparisons of African natives with animals also came readily to lay lips and pens, notes Armesto.⁹⁸⁸ Such comparisons would lead to and justify mass enslavement and extermination of Africans in their tens of millions.⁹⁸⁹

At the height of the slave trade, in the 18th century, French philosophers justified the subjugation of the black slaves.⁹⁹⁰ To Voltaire

'The Negro race is a kind of men as different from ours as the race of bloodhounds differs from that of the greyhounds. It

⁹⁸¹ Ibid; p.7.

⁹⁸² Petrarch: *De Vita Solitaria*; Vi; 3rd ed A. Altamura; (Naples; 1943); pp. 125-6.

⁹⁸³ In F.F. Armesto: *Before Columbus*: op cit; pp 233-4.

⁹⁸⁴ G. Eannes de Zurara: *Cronica de Guine*; Chs 25-6; ed T. De Sousa Soares; 2 Vols; (Lisbon; 1978); vol I; chs 79-82; pp. 295-310.

⁹⁸⁵ F. Fernandez Armesto: *Before Columbus*; op cit; p.180.

⁹⁸⁶ Ibid; p.227.

⁹⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁸ Ibid; pp.240-1.

⁹⁸⁹ R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit.

⁹⁹⁰ J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*; op cit; p. 123.

may be said that, unless their intelligence is of a different kind from our understanding, it is very inferior.'⁹⁹¹

And to Montesquieu:

'Nobody can get used to the idea that God, a most wise being, could have placed a soul, especially a good soul, in an entirely black body.'⁹⁹²

Buffon concludes, that 'on account of the hostile environment in which they had developed, American natives were inferior to those of the Old World.'⁹⁹³ Retzius' cephalic index which distinguishes between dolichocephalic and brachycephalic races, etc, justifies the claim that the various races had each a different origin and nature.'⁹⁹⁴

Until fairly recently, eminent Western 'scientists' had reached conclusions that the Blacks belong to 'the age of awakening consciousness, or nascent intelligence, a state of incipency to moral and mental development.'⁹⁹⁵ Long, one such scientist, concluded that the Negroes were of a totally different race that was nearer to the apes than to Man.'⁹⁹⁶ JJ. Virey: *Histoire naturelle du genre humain*, published in 1802 sees the Celts as the most perfect species and compares the Negroes to apes.'⁹⁹⁷ Cuvier, for his part, 'demonstrated' that the Negro was closer to the ape than to the European.'⁹⁹⁸ James Cowles Prichard,⁹⁹⁹ dressed his racial theories in scientific garb, in his second work *The Natural History of Man* (1843), relying in large measure on Chateaubriand's description of Egypt. By measuring black men's skulls, Prichard sought to prove that the black man's brain was less advanced than the white man's, that he was caught in a state of primitiveness from which it was unlikely that he would ever emerge. A view supported by Burton, who, too, considered the Black man the most inferior species of the human race.'¹⁰⁰⁰ It is also amongst White American supremacists that one reads that:

'Negroes, having multiplied from a half to four millions in less than a century, were of necessity in their normal conditions in

⁹⁹¹ Voltaire: *Essai sur les Moeurs et l'esprit des Nations*; Ch. 141.

⁹⁹² Montesquieu: *Mes Pensees*; 1935; and *De l'Esprit des lois*; XV; 5.

⁹⁹³ Buffon: *Histoire Naturelle*; V; 'Varietes dans l'Espece Humaine; (Paris; 1769); pp. 285-6.

⁹⁹⁴ J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*; op cit; p. 125.

⁹⁹⁵ J. Haller: *Outcasts from Evolution*; (Urbana; 1971); p.51.

⁹⁹⁶ H. Long: *The History of Jamaica*; (London; 1774).

⁹⁹⁷ Quoted in A. Thomson: *Barbary and Enlightenment*; (Brill; Leiden; 1987); p. 72.

⁹⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁹ J. Cowles Prichard: *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind* (1813).

¹⁰⁰⁰ R. Burton: *A Mission to Gelele, King of Dahomey*; (London, 1864); vol 2; p.198.

the South (of the USA); and it also shows, what the census returns show, that in 'freedom' they died out.... Furthermore it shows that amalgamation, as with varieties of our own race that come to us from the Old World, is impossible; and therefore human governments can not exist an hour anywhere where these widely different races are forced into legal equality...

Every man and woman must accept the simple but stupendous truth of white supremacy and Negro subordination.¹⁰⁰¹

As Fontana points out, 'Those who claimed descent from the Franks made speeches with aristocratic tendencies like that of Gobineau, who declared that everything of any note in human history was the work of the Aryans, and that the decadence of societies came from the mingling of their blood with that of the inferior races.'¹⁰⁰²

As Kabbani writes:

'Travel writing of the Victorian period was linked to the nascent discipline of anthropology. Although anthropology was later to become a leveller of cultures and races, its beginnings often served to bolster the self-esteem of the European by convincing him that he was the culmination of excellence in the human species. Other races were his inferiors, lower down on the great scale of being (how low depending on how dark they were). And since they were lower down on that chimerical scale, they shared many qualities with animals, of which unbridled sexual ardour was one. It is illuminating to note how often the native is compared to an animal in this narrative. Iago's reference to Othello as a 'Barbary horse' is only a foreshadowing of the more opprobrious epithets that the Victorians were to coin.'¹⁰⁰³

This ideology purporting the inferiority of other races accounts for the mass slaughter and extermination of native people in the Americas and Oceania. Stannard,¹⁰⁰⁴ Churchill Ward,¹⁰⁰⁵ and Howitt, in particular, have studied these genocides of more than 150 million people justified in the

¹⁰⁰¹ J. Van Evrie: *White Supremacy and Negro Subordination*; Negro Universities Press; (New York; 1868); preface.

¹⁰⁰² J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*; op cit; p. 126.

¹⁰⁰³ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; p. 8.

¹⁰⁰⁴ D.E. Stannard: *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*; (New York; Oxford University Press; 1992).

¹⁰⁰⁵ W. Churchill: *A Little Matter of Genocide*; (City Lights Books; San Francisco; 1997).

name of superiority of the Christian West, and inferiority of other races.¹⁰⁰⁶ The horrors and acts of cruelty described by contemporary witnesses are beyond belief. They are needless to reproduce here, but they were carried out in the belief that the others were mere animals, vermin even.

The historical accounts relating to the extermination of these people due to their race finds absolutely no parallel in Islam. It is a challenge to any 'scholar' who accuses Islam and Muslims of racism to reproduce a single piece of scholarship amongst Muslims that preaches the racial inferiority of others, let alone their mass eradication on account of their racial inferiority.

And, as everyone knows, it is not amongst Muslims that one finds the Ku Klux Klan, and all the National Fronts dedicated to White purity of blood. Never in Islam has a system of Apartheid been set up and implemented, or been supported by other Muslims. The Muslims never burnt a black man for his colour on a crescent shaped stake, and never has a black man been lynched by a Muslim mob. No race, or indigenous group, has been extinguished by the Muslims, removed in their tens of millions from the face of the earth.

True, Muslims have killed few Israelis, but the Muslims never wiped out, or sought to wipe out the Jews. On the contrary, the Jews in many places have owed their survival thanks to Muslim protection.

Neither is there a Muslim National Party dedicated to wiping out others because of their difference of blood, or racial inferiority. These National Fronts have never been, are not, and will never be part of an Islamic political system, simply because racism is not part of the Islamic tradition, and will never be, and no Muslim needs to falsify his or her history to prove this.

¹⁰⁰⁶ W. Howitt: *Colonisation and Christianity*: (Longman; London; 1838).

D E. Stannard: "Genocide in The Americas" in *The Nation*, October 19, 1992 pp. 430-4.

Six

THE DEPICTION OF THE MUSLIM AS AN INFERIOR

Throughout its history, the West has been able to subjugate, oppress and suppress other entities by first depicting them as barbaric (cruel, violent, murderous), and barbarians (inferior, enemies of reason and sciences, primitive, animal-like). These twin themes of barbaric and barbarian have surfaced recurrently in Western culture. Aristotle, for instance, assumes that humanity was naturally divided into masters and servants, civilised people and barbarians.¹⁰⁰⁷ Centuries on, a work written for the edification of the future Queen Isabella of Spain 'The Catholic', in 1468, holds:

'It is said that the barbarous people are those who live without law; the Latin, those who have law: for it is the law of nations that men who live and are ruled by law shall be lords of those who have no law, because they are by nature the slaves of the wise who are ruled by law.'¹⁰⁰⁸

Once the Western expansion in Africa began, the Blacks were depicted by Catholic intellectuals, such as Zurara, 'like beasts, with no law of reasonable creatures ... nor knowledge of good, only of surviving in animal sloth', thus justifying their servitude and, by implication, their incapacity for legitimate self government.¹⁰⁰⁹ For Petrarch, the natives are 'little better than beasts' and seem closer to the wild man tradition than to the classical celebration of primitivism: solitary, sub-rational, instinctive yet still human creatures.¹⁰¹⁰ In the previous generation,

¹⁰⁰⁷ Aristotle: *The Politics*; (Harmondsworth; 1981); book I; in U. Bitterli: *Cultures*; op cit; p. 120.

¹⁰⁰⁸ M. De Cordoba: *Jardin de nobles doncellas*; ed. H. Goldberg (Chapel Hill; 1974); pp. 138-9.

¹⁰⁰⁹ G. Eannes de Zurara: *Cronica de Guine*; op cit; vol I; pp. 141-7.

¹⁰¹⁰ Petrarch: *De Vita Solitaria*, Vi; 3rd ed; A. Altamura; (Naples; 1943); pp. 125-6.

according to Zurara, they seemed drawn from bestiality'.¹⁰¹¹ The pirates reported by Hemmerlin likened them to dogs and monkeys and accused them of barking and howling speech, disgusting table manners, and eating uncooked food. And those broad, flat faces observed by the pirates, suggest cromagnoid origins, and suggest lust and degeneracy.¹⁰¹² Zurara found the first slaves directly shipped from Africa 'so deformed in their faces and bodies as almost to resemble shadows from the nether world'.¹⁰¹³

The Blacks, Armesto sums up, were readily classified by contemporaries in a category not far removed from that of the apes, as men made degenerate by sin, cursed with blackness, as well as being condemned to slavery.¹⁰¹⁴

In North America, as in the south of the continent, the natives were seen as animal-barbaric fiends, which, hence, justified their mass slaying. In 1703, for instance, Boston's Reverend Solomon Stoddard, urged the Massachusetts governor to train a large pack of dogs to hunt down those who remained. Such "dogs would be an extreme terror to the Indians," he said, and would "catch many an Indian that would be too light of foot for us."¹⁰¹⁵ Recognizing that the faint of heart might think his plan "to hunt Indians as they do bears" to be a little extreme, Stoddard acknowledged that he might agree "if the Indians were as other people," but in fact the Indians were wolves "and are to be dealt with as wolves."¹⁰¹⁶

Ward Churchill points out, how:

‘From aristocrats like Jeffrey Amherst to the lowliest private in his army, from the highest elected officials to the humblest of farmers, (all) described America’s indigenous peoples as vermin, launched literally hundreds of campaigns to effect their extermination, and then revelled in the carnage which resulted. Martial glory was attained by more than a few officers who proudly boasted in later years of having instructed their troops, when attacking essentially defenceless native communities, to ‘kill and scalp all, little and big [because] nits make lice. The body parts taken by soldiers in such slaughters remain prized possessions, discreetly handed

¹⁰¹¹ G. E. de Zurara: *Cronica de Guine*; op cit; chs 79-82; I; pp. 295-310.

¹⁰¹² F. Fernandez Armesto: *Before Columbus*; op cit; Chap 9; pp.240-1.

¹⁰¹³ G. E. de Zurara: *Cronica de Guine*; op cit; pp. 107-12.

¹⁰¹⁴ F. Fernandez Armesto: *Before Columbus*; op cit; Chap 9; p.227.

¹⁰¹⁵ D.E. Stannard: "Genocide in The Americas" op cit.

¹⁰¹⁶ Ibid.

down as trophies through the generations of all too many American families.’¹⁰¹⁷

This practice of depicting others as primitive or inferior groups has survived to our day, and has justified mass extermination. The Jews could only be suppressed if they were depicted as inferior, and once they were deemed sub-creatures, killing millions of them was made more acceptable.

It is, thus, altogether normal that the Muslim, whose mass culling has proceeded throughout history, could only be seen in Western depiction as an inferior barbarian, incapable of scientific accomplishments or civilisation. Painting Muslims as capable of any sort of accomplishment would have run against attempts at suppressing them, for only the mass culling of barbarians is justifiable.

Hence, on top of Western depictions of Muslims as barbaric, violent, cruel fiends, and for centuries (as has been seen in the previous chapters), the technique has also consisted in painting them as inferior barbarians, incapable of any accomplishment of any sort.

In order for this depiction of Muslims to prevail, the main technique adopted by Western academia, above all, has been to suppress from knowledge all Muslim accomplishments in science and civilisation one after the other. Hence, gradually, year by year, Western scholarship, in a concerted and well-organised effort, has literally erased from historical knowledge every single Muslim accomplishment, each ‘scholar’ building on a predecessor’s conclusions to suppress more and invent sources other than Muslims for these accomplishments.¹⁰¹⁸ Thus much of the Muslim contribution is ignored, whether to sciences, arts, architecture, to women’s rights, religious toleration, the abolition of slavery, etc, all, instead, being granted to the West. In return (as seen above), all the dark pages of Western history have now become the heritage of Islam. It hardly matters that these role-swaps are based on fallacies, as already seen. It does not matter, of course, that it was the Christian West that borrowed science and civilisation from Islam,¹⁰¹⁹ and it does not matter if

¹⁰¹⁷ Ward Churchill: *A Little Matter of Genocide*; op cit; p. 2.

¹⁰¹⁸ See how this is done in S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Hidden debt*; op cit.

¹⁰¹⁹ See for instance, C. Burnett: *The Introduction of Arabic Learning into England*; The Panizzi Lectures, 1996. (The British Library, London, 1997).
D. Campbell: *Arabian Medicine, and its Influence on the Middle Ages*; (Philo Press; Amsterdam; 1926); reprinted 1974.

it was the Christian West which tortured and burnt millions at the stake for religious reasons, or women as witches,¹⁰²⁰ and enslaved tens of millions of Africans, etc. Courtesy of the crafts of Western opinion-making and rewriting of history, the roles have been completely reversed, and today, the primitive beast, who accomplished nothing of worth, but only legated woes to the modern world, is the Muslim. The Westerner, on the other hand, brings enlightenment, freedom, and civilisation. This is the 'reality' which dominates, and increasingly, not just the world of the media, but worse, academia, taught and conveyed to millions of students. And, of course, like the rest of the denigrations of Muslims and Islam, this takes place with the acquiescence of Muslim elites,¹⁰²¹ who increasingly teach the same fallacies to their own students and in their own schools, and repeat the same things on their television stations, thus legitimising the Western view of themselves as inferior, primitive beings.¹⁰²²

Muslim inferiority, primitiveness and fanatical irrationalism, as increasingly depicted in Western descriptions of Islam, are examined in the following, and their fallacious foundation is demonstrated.

Maria Rosa Menocal: *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1987).

¹⁰²⁰ A. Dworkin: *Woman Hating*; (New York; 1974); p. 130.

¹⁰²¹ With few exceptions such as R. Rashed, F. Sezgin, Al-Faruqi, A. Djebbar, E. Ihsanoglu, Z. Yamani, and few others whose publications are witness to their endeavours and their fight for decades to revive Muslim heritage.

¹⁰²² Any person can visit Muslim schools and colleges, watch Muslim television stations, and even hear eminent Muslim personalities to find them conveying this very filth.

1. The Muslim as an ‘Inept, Uncivilised Barbarian’: The Problem

Today’s vast Western superiority over the Muslim world is military, economic, scientific, and also in terms of communications, information, etc. Looking at the Islamic lands today, all that can be seen are dysfunctional economies and institutions, reliance for survival upon massive aid, masses of people streaming, seemingly purposeless, inept academia, some Muslim countries, in fact, ruled by elites only competent at mass murder, disappearance and torture of their own citizens; a dire image compounded by daily Western propaganda about Islamic terror, intolerance, backwardness, etc. The economic and military backwardness of Muslim society, and Western food aid to some Muslim countries, generalise an attitude of contempt towards Muslims.

The dire state of Muslim society today is compounded by the inability of Muslims to deliver a sustained effort to alter this reality. No change happens unless there is an intellectual belief in such a change. No nation rises unless it has confidence in its own capabilities to rise strong, and be self reliant. Muslims, in general, however, are crippled by their utter lack of self reliance, and worse, many see the other as superior. They generally have little belief that they can achieve as much, and even better, than the Westerner. They are incapable of seeing their history as correct unless it is written by a Westerner. Great numbers of Muslims are incapable of accepting praise unless it comes from a Westerner. And much else can be said in this direction.

This image of the superior other has been inflicted on the Muslims by the West for centuries, and, as the following headings will amply show, has relied on the depiction of the Muslim as an uncivilised, barbarian, plunged into this dire condition by Islam, the faith. As Lueg notes, the supposed inferiority of Islamic countries is repeatedly explained by the fact that followers of Islam are bound by their faith which forswears or prevents every process of modernisation.¹⁰²³ As the Muslim is so depicted, Western historians, writers, artists, media, etc, have suppressed, and are still suppressing, every single Muslim accomplishment in science

¹⁰²³ A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; p. 23.

and civilisation from knowledge, piling upon their shoulders, instead, all the evil that human history has witnessed.

Faced with the depictions of themselves as barbarians, and with their heritage suppressed, the Muslims submit to the Western onslaught defencelessly. The major culprits in this situation are the Muslims themselves, above all their governments and elites. They are to blame for their dire incapacity to defend their culture and civilisation, and their generalised passivity in responding to the Western rhetorical onslaught, which relentlessly depicts them as barbaric and barbarians. The Westernised, secular, Muslim elites in power themselves encourage the myth of Muslim barbarism so as to keep their seats of power and privileges, even if by their actions they are feeding hostile Western depictions of Islam and Muslims. The other Muslim elites (doctors, professors, professionals of all sorts, educators, head teachers...), most of whom, obsessed with material possessions and positions, whose only expertise consists in networking for immediate gains, have helped the Western rhetorical onslaught by their silence.¹⁰²⁴ The Westerners have taken Muslim silence for acquiescence with, and acceptance of labels such as those that have been seen in previous chapters and those to be seen in this one. Even when some Muslims mount occasional, mild rebellions against their depictions as terrorists, oppressors of women, enslavers, inept, uncivilised barbarians, etc, they lack the intellectual might to do so. The reason for this is our present intellectual poverty. So dire is the situation today, that in the West, some of the best Muslim intellectuals the nation ever had are put in a situation either to sell out their principles, or serve fast food, or beg social services in order to earn a living, or just survive. This is compounded by the scarcity of book reading and book production amongst Muslims. Western polemicists themselves pick on the latter Muslim weakness as a sign of decline and backwardness. It is undeniable, indeed, that Muslim society produces few books, and very few Muslims read, thus maintaining Muslims in a vicious circle of illiteracy which spirals, turning the intellectual, or well-learned Muslim today into an oddity. In this intellectual barrenness, the field for resurgence and revival is narrowed, for children follow on the paths of their parents with a similar loathing for book reading. This also leaves the way open to whomsoever wishes to make a rhetorical onslaught upon the Muslims to do so with impunity. Muslims' silent acquiescence to their inferior status, together with their

¹⁰²⁴ With few exceptions cited above (R. Rashed, F. Sezgin, Yamani, Kabbani, Tibawi, etc..) whose works and publications are witness to their fight for their culture.

generalised weakness and backwardness (economic, military, etc), explain why, for the last two to three decades, in particular, like other nations and races deemed inferior in the past, they are being slain en masse, in one place after the other, amidst general indifference; mutilated Muslim corpses being collected by wailing relatives, generally from rubbish dumps. Such a sight having become so generalised, the Muslims themselves are now unable to rise in revulsion and anger against it, or against a rhetoric which, by turning them into animals, has made their regular mass culling an acceptable feature of the modern world..

The miserable condition of Muslim society and the utterly miserable condition of its elites today are, however, not due to Islam, the faith, contrary to what is continually asserted by Westerners. This lamentable condition is the result of a variety of factors, which this author has written about elsewhere.¹⁰²⁵ In fact, rather than it (Islam) being the cause of Muslim decline, it was Islam which for many centuries made Muslim society the greatest civilisation of all, Muslim civilisation rising precisely at the same time as the faith (from the 7th century onwards), and staying great when the faith was in power.¹⁰²⁶ It was also Islam that dragged the West out of its barbarism.

Some ten-twelve centuries or so ago, indeed, the picture was all the reverse from what it is today. As Lombard says:

‘Nous vivions dans des clairières. L'Islam, lui, brillait de tous ses feux...’ (We were living in the wilderness; Islam then was shining with all its lights).¹⁰²⁷

Draper elaborates on this contrast:

‘When Europe was hardly more enlightened than Caffraria is now, the Saracens were cultivating and even creating science. Their triumphs in philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, proved to be more glorious, more durable, and therefore more important than their military actions had been.’¹⁰²⁸

When the Muslims entered Spain in the early 8th century, in the Spanish Asturias, as Scott tells us, the local Christian inhabitants lived in

¹⁰²⁵ S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Golden Age*; op cit.

¹⁰²⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁷ The article appeared in *Le Temps Stratégique* No 20, Spring 1987; but can be found at <http://www.archipress.org/batin/ts20lombard.htm>.

¹⁰²⁸ J.W. Draper: *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*; (George Bell and Sons; 1875); Vol I; p. 412.

‘Rude hovels constructed of stones and unhewn timber, thatched with straw, floored with rushes and provided with a hole in the roof to enable the smoke to escape; their walls and ceilings were smeared with soot and grease, and every corner reeked with filth and swarmed with vermin.’¹⁰²⁹

The pre-Islamic inhabitants of Spain, Scott pursues, were

‘In appearance and intelligence, scarcely removed from the condition of savages.’ They wore sheepskins and hides of wild beasts, which, unchanged, remained in one family for many generations, and ‘the salutary habit of ablution was never practised by them. Their garments were never cleansed, and were worn as long as their tattered fragments held together.’¹⁰³⁰

Throughout Western Christendom, the only few blessed with the capacity to read were ecclesiastics, a few souls lost in wide stretches of rural ignorance.¹⁰³¹ The monasteries were

‘Islands in a sea of ignorance and barbarism, saving learning from extinction in Western Europe at a time when no other forces worked strongly to that end.’¹⁰³²

This was at the time, Campbell notes, when the Caliphs of Baghdad and Cordova endowed and fostered education among their subjects (both Muslims and non Muslims) to such an extent that in the latter city every boy and girl of twelve was able to read and write.¹⁰³³

It was such a big contrast that the 11th century Spanish Muslim, Said al-Andalusi, in his book *The Categories of Nations*, singling out the peoples who had cultivated the sciences, finds no place for Western Christendom.¹⁰³⁴

It was Islam, which, in the expression of Lombard, ‘dragged Western Christendom out of its ‘barbarian night.’¹⁰³⁵ It was Islam which promoted trade and culture, and the Islamic advance, which dragged the West into ‘an astonishing progress and the re-launching of its civilisation’.¹⁰³⁶ Smith agrees:

¹⁰²⁹ S.P. Scott: *History of the Moorish Empire in Europe*; op cit; p.339.

¹⁰³⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰³¹ C.H. Haskins: *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, (Harvard University Press, 1927): pp. 32-4.

¹⁰³² Ibid.

¹⁰³³ D. Campbell: *Arabian Medicine*; op cit; pp. xiii-xiv:

¹⁰³⁴ P. Benoit and F. Micheau: *The Arab intermediary: in A History of Scientific Thought*, M. Serres editor; (Blackwell, 1995); pp 191-221; p. 202.

¹⁰³⁵ M. Lombard: *Nous Vivions*; op cit.

¹⁰³⁶ Ibid.

‘The dark ages of Europe would have been doubly, nay trebly dark but for the Arabs who alone by their arts and sciences, by their agriculture, their philosophy, and their virtues, shone out amidst the universal gloom of ignorance and crime, who gave to Spain and to Europe an Averroes and an Avicenna, the Alhambra and the Al-Kazar..... It was the Arabs who developed the sciences of agriculture and astronomy, and created those of algebra and chemistry; who adorned their cities with colleges and libraries, as well as with mosques and palaces; who supplied Europe with a school of philosophers from Cordova, and a school of physicians from Salerno.’¹⁰³⁷

The discovery of Islamic learning, Levey points out, did not just arrive at a time when the movement of ideas was ‘at a relative standstill,’ but the Muslims also came along with a new outlook, with a sense of enquiry into the old and finally brought it to a point ‘where Western Europe could take over this thoroughly examined knowledge.’¹⁰³⁸

The West had to go through a long and painful learning process to switch position with the Muslims. To do this, the West did not just borrow the best of science and learning from the Muslims, it also appropriated Islamic material wealth, through piracy and use of violence.¹⁰³⁹

The Western appropriation of both Islamic science and wealth to build Western civilisation, together with slavery and other dark pages of history, are precisely the matters which Western history is very uneasy with, and which Western historians and opinion makers seek to remove or distort.¹⁰⁴⁰

‘The debt of Europe to the ‘heathen dog’ could, of course, find no place in the scheme of Christian history, and the garbled falsification has imposed itself on all subsequent conceptions,’ says Briffault.¹⁰⁴¹ ‘The history of the rebirth of Europe from barbarism is constantly being written without any reference whatsoever, except to mention ‘the triumphs of the Cross over the Crescent,’ and ‘the reclamation of Spain from the Moorish yoke,” to the influence of Arab civilisation.’¹⁰⁴²

¹⁰³⁷ R.B. Smith: *Mohammed*; op cit; pp. 125-6; and 217.

¹⁰³⁸ M. Levey: *Early Arabic Pharmacology*, (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1973), p. 71.

¹⁰³⁹ S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Golden Age*; op cit; and also sources referred to.

¹⁰⁴⁰ For more on this, see S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Hidden Debt*; op cit

¹⁰⁴¹ R. Briffault: *The Making of Humanity*, (George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1928), p.

189.

¹⁰⁴² Ibid.

Draper speaks of:

'The systematic manner in which the literature of Europe has contrived to put out of sight our scientific obligations to the Muhammadans...' ¹⁰⁴³

Neither will historians (with few exceptions) admit the Western part in the downfall of the Muslim foe; a downfall, that helped the West rise at its expense. The economic ruin of the Muslims, indeed, exactly corresponded with the rise of the Christian West, the 'fall of the East' preceding the 'Rise of the West,' says Janet Abu Lughod. ¹⁰⁴⁴ A point also made by Heyd, ¹⁰⁴⁵ Braudel, ¹⁰⁴⁶ De Mas Latrie, ¹⁰⁴⁷ and Mathiex, ¹⁰⁴⁸ who all highlight the Western Christian plunder that ruined both Islamic trade and economic system in and around the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

These are the central issues with which Western history finds itself greatly uneasy. If Western history and opinion-making apparatus accept the Islamic role in the rise of the West, and the Western role in the destruction of Islamic power, how will they then justify the occupation, the repeated slaughters of such an Islamic foe by the West, when both occupation and mass killing of Muslims have been justified on the ground of a civilising mission to 'an inferior'? And how too can they justify today's daily onslaught on the 'fanaticism, barbarism, and backwardness of Islam,' also carried out so as to justify the direct and indirect subjugation of Muslim lands, and impose the Western ways by brute force, whether directly or by proxies? This accounts for the near total blackout imposed on the Western indebtedness to Islam, and instead, the relentless, brutal, monotonous propaganda about Muslim barbarism and inferiority as the following amply shows.

¹⁰⁴³ J.W. Draper: *A History*; op cit; Vol 2; p. 42.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Janet L. Abu-Lughod: *Before European Hegemony*, (Oxford University Press, 1989); p.361.

¹⁰⁴⁵ W. Heyd: *Geschichte des Levantehandels im Mittelalter*; 2 vols; 1879.

¹⁰⁴⁶ F. Braudel: *Grammaire des Civilisations*; (Flammarion, 1987).

¹⁰⁴⁷ M.L. de Mas Latrie: *Traites de paix et de Commerce, et Documents Divers, Concernant les Relations des Chretiens avec les Arabes de l'Afrique Septentrionale au Moyen Age*, (Burt Franklin, New York), Originally Published in Paris, 1866.

¹⁰⁴⁸ J. Mathiex: *Trafic et prix de l'Homme en Mediterranee au 17 et 18 Siecles*; *ANNALES: Economies, Societes, Civilisations*: Vol 9:pp 157-164;

2. 'Muslim Inherent Inferiority'

The general impression Westerners have of Muslims is caught by Sardar and Davies:

'Universally, Muslims - in their manifestations as Saracens, Orientals, Arabs, Moors, Ottomans, Indians, Bedouins were described as primitive, gullible, habitual liars, lazy, lacking initiative, fanatic, violent, suspicious, stupid, unclean, notoriously cowardly, insolent, treacherous, sexually perverted and prone to conscious and unconscious indecent exposure in public. Whether the literary work was a product of 'the giants of those days', or their less accomplished contemporaries, a narrative of the journey 'beyond forbidden frontiers' or an account of a period of stay in 'the Orient', the descriptions of Muslims were always the same.'¹⁰⁴⁹

It is impossible to repeat the vast amount of Western disparagement of Muslims, which have run through history. Some of this has also already been seen, or will be examined further on. Thus, only few randomly picked instances will be given.

The late medieval Western humanist, Petrarch, asserts the superiority of Europeans to the 'Backward Muslims in a verse that contrasts the Northern European warrior spirit of the people who live in a land 'that always lies in ice and frozen in the snows, all distant from the path of the sun to the softness of the Muslim peoples:

'Turks, Arabs, Chaldeans... a naked, cowardly, and lazy people who never grasp the steel but endure all their blows to the wind.'¹⁰⁵⁰

Hence, Petrarch, Bisaba notes, reduces formidable Muslim empires to an image of disorganised and uncivilised hunters and gatherers who rely on archery because they lack the skill and courage to fight in hand to hand combat. Petrarch, thus, describes the Arab people as the same wild Saracens the Romans encountered a millennium earlier, not the

¹⁰⁴⁹ Z. Sardar; M-W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; p. 49.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Petrarch's *Lyric Poems*; ed and trans R. M. Durling; (Cambridge; 1976); pp. 76-7.

advanced civilisation of vast trade networks, great armies, large cities, and extensive learning.¹⁰⁵¹

From the 11th through the mid 17th century, Blanks points out, derisive attacks by Western authors were born of a nagging inferiority complex vis à vis Arab civilisation. In the course of the 17th century, however, the Muslim states ceased to be a threat politically. So, in the modern period, derisive attitudes arise not from an inferiority complex but from a Eurocentric sense of cultural superiority.¹⁰⁵²

This sense of Western superiority increased as the gaps between Islam and the West widened as seen here through some 18th and 19th century depictions of Muslims. Beginning with 18th century thought, and Voltaire, for whom the Muslims are brigands, who kept robbing and stealing in the name of God. They have, according to him, no notion of heroism, all murdering and thieving only. As for the spread of Islam in many lands, he asserts, it was due to the Muslim eagerness for plunder.¹⁰⁵³ In Voltaire's view, there is, no better identification of Muslims with robbers and brigands than their very name: Saracen, which derives from *Saraq*; thief.¹⁰⁵⁴

A major vice of North Africans, according to the 18th century encyclopaedist, Saint Sauveur is laziness:

‘Nature fertilizes their lands in vain; the slothful citizens turn deaf ears to the imprecations of nature.’¹⁰⁵⁵

Saint Sauveur also observes that:

‘Superstition and despotism will shortly have transformed this breeding ground of fine men into a desert. The Qur'an and the cudgel do not suffice to make heads of families happy in a promising, but poorly cultivated, region.’¹⁰⁵⁶

The same for Abbé Vincent Mignot, for whom Muslims are incapable of any order, and their alleged courage is only the result of their Prophet's solemn promise that all those who die fighting the ‘infidels’ will be

¹⁰⁵¹ N. Bisaba: ‘New Barbarian’ or worthy adversary? Humanist Constructs of the Ottoman Turks in fifteenth century Italy; in *Western Perceptions* (Blanks-Frassetto ed); op cit; pp. 185-205; p. 189.

¹⁰⁵² D.R. Blanks: Western Views of Islam in the Pre-modern Period: A Brief History of Past Approaches; in *Western Perceptions* (Blanks-Frassetto ed); pp. 11-53; p. 14.

¹⁰⁵³ Voltaire in A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; at p. 146.

¹⁰⁵⁴ In A. Gunny: *Images*; at p.193

¹⁰⁵⁵ J.G. De Saint-Sauveur's *Encyclopedie des voyages* (1796) In L. Valensi: *North Africa before the French Conquest; 1790-1830*; tr. by K. J. Perkins; (Africana Publishing Company; London; 1977); p. xx.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Ibid; p. xxi.

admitted to paradise regardless of any crimes they may have committed.¹⁰⁵⁷

Besides his faith, other factors, such as climate, tend to render the Muslim into a barbarian, unable to reason. Montesquieu, in his search for the spirit of the laws, assumes that human beings, their temper, passions, character and physical state are under the influence of climate.¹⁰⁵⁸ He maintains that climate affects people not only as individuals but also as collectivities; it shapes their culture, customs and morals as a whole, it is crucial to see that climate is, in fact, an historical constant, independent variable that explains the differences among peoples and their respective tempers.¹⁰⁵⁹

In cold climates, peoples' characters are marked by courage, greater sense of superiority, greater opinion of security; that is more frankness, less suspicion, policy and cunning. The people of warm climates display the strongest passions which produce all sorts of crimes, whereas in warmer countries desire stimulates action:

'There is no curiosity, no enterprise, no generosity of sentiment; the inclinations are all passive; indolence constitutes the utmost happiness; scarcely any punishment is so severe as mental employment; and slavery is more supportable than the force and vigour of mind necessary for human conduct.'¹⁰⁶⁰

The same concept of Muslim natural and cultural inferiority is emphasised in the 19th century. About the 'Moors of Barbary,' Pananti has this to say:

'There is something harsh and ominous in their physiognomy, extremely repulsive to the European.' Their countenance is never enlivened by a noble thought or a generous sentiment, 'theirs is the smile of death'. They are perfidious, debauched, avaricious and so on.¹⁰⁶¹

However it might be possible to redeem North Africans if they were governed by Christians who would convert 'those who are now

¹⁰⁵⁷ Abbe Vincent Mignot: *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman depuis son origine....*; (Paris; 1771), in A. Gunny: Images; op cit; pp. 172-3.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws*; 1748; Tr. T. Nugent; (New York; Hafner Publishing; 1966); p. 224.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Montesquieu in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; pp. 118-9.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws*; op cit; p. 224.

¹⁰⁶¹ F. Pananti: *Narrative of a residence in Algiers*; Tr. E. Blaquiére: (London; 1818); pp.192-7.

scarcely superior to the brute creation into good men and industrious citizens.¹⁰⁶²

For Renan:

‘It is the Aryan spirit, which has created everything: political life in the real sense, art, literature - the Semitic peoples have nothing of it, apart from some poetry - above all science and philosophy.... The Semitic spirit has produced monotheism... closing the human brain to every subtle idea, to every fine sentiment, to all rational research.’¹⁰⁶³ The future of humanity therefore lies with the peoples of Europe. But there is a necessary condition for this to happen: the destruction of the Semitic element in civilisation, and of the theocratic power of Islam.¹⁰⁶⁴

Hain, of the *Société Coloniale de l'Etat d'Alger* (Colonial Society of Algiers), is much less confident in this. In a pamphlet entitled *A la Nation. Sur Alger*, he explains:

‘It is ridiculous to think of civilising the inhabitants of the conquered territory, for they are incapable of any improvement; they must be cleared off the land to make the way for French colonists. ... Every Arab is a criminal; criminal by birth; criminal in essence; criminal by vocation. They delight in causing suffering.’¹⁰⁶⁵

To him, only extermination would seem good enough for them.¹⁰⁶⁶

The Western travellers/writers of the 19th century fostered the same image of the inferior Muslim/Arab. The colonial powers produced a great number of such travellers. Nineteenth-century Britain, for instance, gave rise to a growing mass of travel literature, in a frenzied attempt to know the world it was in the process of conquering.¹⁰⁶⁷ The travellers, Kabbani notes, travelled for their country, as it were; they were the seeing eye and the recounting voice. They often had financial backing from officialdom, since their travelogues ultimately served to forge the imperial representation of the world. The traveller was now ‘Pilgrim and Hero and Christian Soldier.’¹⁰⁶⁸

¹⁰⁶² Ibid; p 416.

¹⁰⁶³ E. Renan: *De la Part des peuples semitiques dans l'histoire de la civilisation* in *Oeuvres complètes*, (Paris, Calmann-Levy, 1947), Vol II; p. 333.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Ibid, pp 332-3.

¹⁰⁶⁵ V.A. Hain: *A La Nation. Sur Alger*; (Paris; 1832); pp 78; 94.

¹⁰⁶⁶ In A. Thomson: *Barbary and Enlightenment*. (Brill; Leiden; 1987); p. 101.

¹⁰⁶⁷ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; pp. 1-8.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Ibid.

One such traveller, Lane,¹⁰⁶⁹ although claiming his judgements were unemotional, unerring, highly specialised, and all-encompassing, as he himself says, 'What I have principally aimed at in this work is correctness,'¹⁰⁷⁰ still found the Orientals '... indolent, superstitious, sensually over-indulgent and religiously fanatical.'¹⁰⁷¹ He observes about the Egyptians that they are marked by 'quickness of apprehension, a ready wit, and a retentive memory.' Unfortunately he writes, their mental energy is lessened by their religion, laws, government and climate.'¹⁰⁷² He insists on Egyptian ignorance, and offers an apologia for the nation's shortcomings:

'Such being the state of science among the modern Egyptians, the reader will not be surprised at finding the present chapter on science followed by a long account of their superstitions; a knowledge of which is necessary to enable him to understand their character, and to make due allowance for many of its faults.'¹⁰⁷³

This nation, with the character of its inhabitants so 'heavily plagued by faults, had only one hope for improvement - the enlightenment that could be brought to it through contact with the West:

'We may hope for, and, indeed, reasonably expect, a very great improvement in the intellectual and moral state of this people, in consequence of the introduction of European sciences, by which Mohammad 'Alee, in some degree, made amends for his oppressive sway.'¹⁰⁷⁴

Lane's optimism, however, is short-lived:

'It is not probable that this hope will soon be realised to any considerable extent'.¹⁰⁷⁵

Doughty, a geologist/traveller, who went across the desert of Arabia in order to find 'the bare face of the world as it was when it began,' records his impressions.¹⁰⁷⁶ The attachment to Islam of the people repulses him:

'Perilous every bond which can unite many of the human millions, for living and dying.'¹⁰⁷⁷

¹⁰⁶⁹ E. W. Lane: *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*; (London; 1836).

¹⁰⁷⁰ In N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*, op cit; p. 52.

¹⁰⁷¹ E.W. Lane: *Manners*; in R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; pp. 38-9.

¹⁰⁷² E.W. Lane: *Manners*; vol 1; pp. 377 ff.

¹⁰⁷³ Ibid; p. 221.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁶ C.M. Doughty: *Arabia Deserta*, Edition; 2 Vols; (London J. Cape; 1936). (First published by Cambridge University Press, 1888);. See R.Bevis 'Spiritual Geology: C.M. Doughty and the land of the Arabs,' *Victorian Studies*, 16 (1972-3); pp 163-81.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Doughty: *Arabia Deserta*; Vol 1: p. 141.

He portrayed the Arabs as superstitious beings who live in filth while cloaked in holiness. One much-quoted phrase sums up his mental picture of the Arabs:

‘The Semites are like to a man sitting in a cloaca to the eyes, and whose brows touch heaven.’¹⁰⁷⁸

He goes on:

‘The contagion of the Arab’s religion has spread nearly as far as the pestilence: a battle gained and it had overflowed Europe. The nations of Islam, of a barbarous fox-like understanding, and persuaded in their religion that knowledge is only in the Koran, cannot now come upon any way that’s good.’¹⁰⁷⁹

Eliot Warburton, in *The Crescent and the Cross*,¹⁰⁸⁰ holds that Britain may well have the responsibility to enter this section of the world

‘To vindicate the Cross where her best and bravest blood was shed six hundred years ago,’ to bring civilisation and morality to these degenerate peoples.’¹⁰⁸¹

The Frenchman, Chateaubriand, as soon as he reaches the coast of Palestine, notes:

‘The Arab, drifting along the coast, follows with an eager eye the vessel which passes in the horizon; he is waiting for a corpse out of a sea-wreck to plunder it just by the shore where Jesus Christ ordered to feed those who were hungry.’¹⁰⁸²

In Constantinople, he no longer sees Muslims walking the streets, but instead sees a herd in the claws of the double authority of the imam and the Janissary.¹⁰⁸³

The American G. W. Curtis wrote *The Howadji* in Syria, appearing around this time.¹⁰⁸⁴ The people he met through Syria impress him as

‘Repulsive in appearance, the dregs of the refuse races. They look mean and treacherous and would offer small resistance to determination and skill.’¹⁰⁸⁵

These and similar depictions, as will be amply seen in the last chapter, were used to justify Western colonisation of the Islamic lands. The image

¹⁰⁷⁸ Ibid; p. 95.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ibid; p.142.

¹⁰⁸⁰ E. Warburton: *The Crescent and the Cross*; (New York; Wiley and Putnam; 1845); I; p. 65 f.

¹⁰⁸¹ Ibid; I; p.242.

¹⁰⁸² Chateaubriand: *Itineraire*; in D. Brahim: *Arabes des Lumieres et Bedouins Romantiques* (Le Sycomore; Paris; 1982), p. 131.

¹⁰⁸³ Chateaubriand: *Itineraire de Paris a Jerusalem* (1969); pp. 941-2.

¹⁰⁸⁴ G.W. Curtis: *The Howadji in Syria*; (New York; Harper; 1852).

¹⁰⁸⁵ Ibid; p.132.

The Myth of Muslim Barbarism – and its Aims

of Muslim inferiority they built also required the suppression from knowledge of Muslim accomplishments in science and civilisation.

3. Suppressing Muslim Heritage from Knowledge

History shows that when others were living in the dark ages, the Muslims had a great civilisation. This civilisation thrived precisely when Islamic society was ruled by the so-called theocratic state of Islam, which is today associated with barbarism and violence. It was this Muslim civilisation, which as noted already, brought the Christian West out from its dark Ages. However, because precisely this Islamic state, and Islam as a faith, were seen as the enemy to be fought, and shown to be backward and barbaric, and Muslims to be depicted as inferior, any Muslim accomplishment in science and civilisation was either concealed, or attributed to the Greeks and others (the Hindus, for instance), or belittled as much as possible. This issue has been examined at great length in a large work by this author.¹⁰⁸⁶ Here, briefly outlined are the ways and forms of how Muslim contributions to science and civilisation have been suppressed or at best demeaned.

Von Grunebaum is one of those 'specialists' who seek to inform us about Islam, and in doing so, insists on the generalised Muslim ineptitude, and indebtedness to others. Thus, he says:

'Despite its borrowing from Jewish and Christian theology, Greek philosophy, Persian administration and literature, Indian mathematics and astronomy, Islam, 'has always combined a capacity for absorption of foreign elements with a certain reluctance to admit their foreign origin.'¹⁰⁸⁷

This can be challenged on two grounds, the first is that Von Grunebaum gives the impression that the whole Islamic culture in all its manifestations is a series of borrowings from everyone, hardly including any element of independent creativeness. This is false, for Islamic civilisation is primarily inspired by the Qur'an, the faith of Islam being the direct source of influence on most Islamic achievements, scientific and others.¹⁰⁸⁸ The second criticism of Von Grunebaum is his assertion that Muslims were reluctant to admit foreign borrowings, which is also false as can be checked in Islamic writing and records, Muslims have taken great care in acknowledging others' sources and always expressing gratitude to them. In fact had it not been for Muslims recording such

¹⁰⁸⁶ S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Hidden Debt*; op cit.

¹⁰⁸⁷ G.E. Von Grunebaum: *Islam*, (Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1961).p. x.

¹⁰⁸⁸ This is discussed at great length in S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Golden Age*; op cit.

influences, historians would have been hampered in tracing such earlier, non-Islamic sources. In fact, failure to acknowledge sources of borrowing belongs to the Westerners, who suppress their indebtedness to Islam.

Pursuing the demeaning of the Muslim contribution to sciences, Wiet et al say:

‘Arabian science owed much to Indian algebra, astronomy and chemistry. An Indian treatise on astronomy (Siddhanta) was translated into Arabic in 771 under the title Sindhind. Ya'kub Ibn Tarik's *Composition of the Celestial Spheres* was drawn up on the basis of Indian data.’¹⁰⁸⁹

Thus, Wiet and his group attribute the whole of Islamic science, tens of thousands of treatises on diverse sciences,¹⁰⁹⁰ to the translation of one single treatise. For Wiet and his group's assertion to be true, all Muslim works would have to be a reproduction of that Indian work, and all to be similar. This, of course, is not the case, for Muslim sciences encompassed all subjects and disciplines, were rich and diverse, and remain the foundation of our modern sciences.¹⁰⁹¹

Like Wiet and his group, on Mathematics, Sherwood Taylor says:

‘The Arabs’ main achievement was the development of arithmetic and algebra, though even here the greater part of their achievement derived from India and Greece.’¹⁰⁹²

And in the particular case of the Arabic numerals, we are told that if they originate from the West, they belong to Greece or Rome.¹⁰⁹³ If, however, their origin is from the East, they are Hindu.¹⁰⁹⁴ Hence, in no case they are Muslim.

Historical reality, however, shows that these numerals appeared in the Islamic world. They are explained by Islamic sources, and are called Arabic, and most importantly, in their modern form, have never been used in India or the West before the Muslims. This hardly means the Muslims never borrowed elements of Indian mathematics; of course, they did. But as far as the numerals are concerned, they differ from Indian numerals in form, and it is only in Western Islam where they can be

¹⁰⁸⁹ G. Wiet et al: *History of Mankind*: Vol III; op cit; p.975.

¹⁰⁹⁰ For an exhaustive review of the Muslim contribution to sciences, see G. Sarton: *Introduction to the History of Science*; op cit.

¹⁰⁹¹ H. Suter: *Die Mathematiker und Astronomen der Araber und ihre Werke* (1900); (APA, Oriental Press, Amsterdam, reedit; 1982).

¹⁰⁹² F. Sherwood Taylor: *A Short History of Science*; (William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1939); p.78.

¹⁰⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁴ G. Wiet et al; *History of Mankind*; op cit; p.205.

found to correspond in form and use to what exactly we have today. The Arab numerals were introduced and re-introduced into Western Christendom by Gerbert (late 10th century) and Fibonacci (1202) from Spain and North Africa respectively.¹⁰⁹⁵ Had these numerals been European in origin, why were they hidden for fifteen centuries; shunned, and even forbidden from use by Western Christendom? In fact, they were forbidden from use in the Western world for centuries precisely because they symbolised Islam and the Muslim enemy.¹⁰⁹⁶

As stated already, Western scholarship and opinion making have pursued the twin strategy of gradually removing the negative from Western history and granting it to Muslims, and of suppressing Muslim accomplishments and granting them to others, to the West primarily. Halpern has raised this issue of the many achievements taken away from the Muslims one after the other.¹⁰⁹⁷ The dominant practice has been for modern historians to complement each other in taking away from the Muslims scientific and other accomplishments which earlier Western sources have granted them. Hence, the eighteenth century historian Gibbon declared that chemistry owes its origin and great role to the industry of 'the Saracens':

"They first invented and named the alembic for the purpose of distillation, analysed the substances of the three kingdoms of nature, tried the distinction and affinities of alcalis and acids, and converted the poisonous minerals into soft and salutary medicines."¹⁰⁹⁸

However, a century after Gibbon, Berthelot (and his countless followers) took away from the Muslims every significant contribution in this field, ascribing rather to Western alchemists whatever advances were made.¹⁰⁹⁹ The same happened in relation to architecture, whereby the so-called Gothic style was amply demonstrated by Christopher Wren in the 17th century to be of Muslim authorship, at a time, when Gothic was identified with the barbaric.¹¹⁰⁰ Today, however, hardly

¹⁰⁹⁵ C. Singer: *The Earliest Chemical Industry*; (The Folio Society; London; 1958); p. 85;

W. Montgomery Watt: *The Influence of Islam on Medieval Europe*, (Edinburgh, 1972); pp. 63-4.

¹⁰⁹⁶ D.J. Struik: The Prohibition of the use of Arabic numerals in Florence: *Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Sciences* Vol 21 pp 291-4; p. 294:

¹⁰⁹⁷ L. Halpern: *l'Essor de l'Europe (XI-XIII Siecles)*; (Presses Universitaires de France; Paris; 1941); p. 101.

¹⁰⁹⁸ In C.H. Haskins: *The Renaissance of the Twelfth century*; op cit. pp. 319-20.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Ibid; p. 320.

¹¹⁰⁰ J. Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession*; (Cambridge University Press, 1987); p.6.

any historian attributes it to Islam. The same with regard to the Arabic numerals, once shunned,¹¹⁰¹ regarded even as a symbol of 'Saracen magic.'¹¹⁰² Then, as they became the foundation of modern civilisation, and by a gradual re-working by modern historians, these numerals are no longer Arabic, hardly any modern historian failing to call them Hindu, or even attribute their origins to Western sources.¹¹⁰³ Experimentation and the experimental method were viewed in the Western Middle Ages as dabbling with the occult; any person who performed experiments or made astronomical observations soon incurring the suspicion that he carried on the forbidden intercourse with the world of demons.¹¹⁰⁴ Gradually, again, in the interpretation of modern historians, experimentation has become a purely Western creation, regardless of the evidence.¹¹⁰⁵ In relation to the rise of modern science, through the use of reason against authority, one of the early Western scientists, Adelard of Bath, its promoter, attributes his inspiration to his 'masters' the Arabs. Adelard in his *Quaestiones naturales*, for instance, praises the learning and rational method of Arab teachers, and says, explicitly: 'a magistris Arabicis ratione duce didici'¹¹⁰⁶

Yet modern historians overwhelmingly question Adelard's affirmation itself, one such modern historian, Brian Lawn, stressing that Adelard did not mean 'Arab,' his inspiration being Classical (Greek) thought, instead.¹¹⁰⁷

The 12th century Western translators who performed the greatest translation effort in history from Arabic into Latin, without one single exception, stated that their dearest wish was to acquire the sciences of 'the Arabs,' and to transmit it to the West. Gerard of Cremona, the leading figure amongst such translators, faced with the 'multitude' of

¹¹⁰¹ D.J. Struik: *The Prohibition*; op cit; p. 294:

¹¹⁰² William of Malmesbury: *History of the kings of England*, in L. Cochrane: *Adelard of Bath*, (British Museum Press, 1994); p. 43.

¹¹⁰³ See H.P. Lattin: *The Origin of our present system of notation according to the theories of Nicholas Bubnov*. In *ISIS*; XIX; pp. 181-94; at p. 182.

¹¹⁰⁴ E.J. Dijksterhuis: *The Mechanization of the World Picture*; (Oxford at the Clarendon Press; 1961): p.104.

¹¹⁰⁵ A.C Crombie: *Robert Grosseteste and the Origins of the Experimental Science*, (Oxford, 1953).

¹¹⁰⁶ *Quaestiones Naturales*, ed. M. Muller; BGPTM xxxi (1934) ii; quotation in J. Jolivet: *The Arabic Inheritance*; in *A History of Twelfth Century Western Philosophy*; Ed by P. Dronke; (Cambridge University Press; 1988); pp.113-48; at p. 113.

¹¹⁰⁷ B. Lawn: *The Salernitan Questions*; (Oxford at the Clarendon Press; 1963); pp. 21-2.

Arabic books in every field, even 'pitied the poverty of the Latin.'¹¹⁰⁸ Modern history, however, overwhelmingly, insists that such translators aimed at the recuperation of 'Greek' learning.

And the list can go on endlessly, showing how each modern historian, building on his/her predecessor, removes more traces of the Islamic role, until such Islamic role is fundamentally erased, and a new version of history is established.

If and when scientific breakthroughs and aspects of civilisation, or any other accomplishment, including military victories, cannot be denied to the Muslims, Western historians then resort to another technique: they present any such Islamic accomplishment as something of lower standard, even vulgar. Thus, Muslim geographers, Perroy says:

'All or nearly all, follow the practice of plagiarism of the Middle Ages, inspiring themselves for more than half of the works of Ptolemy, whose text they copied.'¹¹⁰⁹

The same derogatory view is applied to Muslim historians. Hillenbrand, for instance, constantly reminds us of the exaggerations by Muslim historians, such as when she writes:

'Even allowing for the usual exaggerations and bias of both these authors (Ibn Shaddad and Imad al-Din)...'¹¹¹⁰

Bosworth, for his part, praises Morgan who had dismissed the 'poor standards of Muslim historians,' saying:

'Dr Morgan, as editor, has a short but useful introduction contrasting the generalised backwardness of the research techniques of Islamic scholars.....'¹¹¹¹

Even the greatest scholars of Islam, such as al-Biruni, do not escape criticism. Theodorides says:

'We find with Al-Biruni expressed ideas, which preceded those of Malthus by centuries, about the disproportionate rise of population and that of resources to sustain it. Al-Biruni also talks about experimental farming of wheat and trees... But these

¹¹⁰⁸ C.H. Haskins: *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science*. (Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. New York; 1967 ed). p. 14.

¹¹⁰⁹ E. Perroy: *Encore Mahomet et Charlemagne in Bedeutung Und Rolle des Islam Beim ubergang Vom Altertum Zum Mittelalter*, ed by P.E. Hubinger; (Darmstadt, 1968); pp. 266-75; at p.271.

¹¹¹⁰ C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades, Islamic Perspectives*; (Edinburgh; 1999); p.537.

¹¹¹¹ C.E. Bosworth review of D.O. Morgan, ed: *Medieval historical writing in the Christian and Islamic worlds*; (London; SOAS; 1982); in *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol 1985p.78.

ideas, as rightly seen by Wilczynski are only approximations, and vague ideas, based on nothing scientific.¹¹¹²

This is fundamentally incorrect. Al-Biruni's works show an abundance of scientific theories on mountain and land formation, diverse geological phenomena etc, and their impact on modern sciences.¹¹¹³

Muslim science is also deemed by Western commentators to be mere plagiarism, as we are told, first by Sherwood Taylor:

'The new discoveries of the Arabic world were few: the Arabs must be looked on as preservers of knowledge rather than originators of it. They absorbed foreign ideas with astonishing readiness and their assimilation of Greek culture was a fine achievement; none the less they originated no single great conception. The Moslem theology regarded all events as direct acts of God, a view which denied scientific law and made the miraculous credible. The scientific world-view was, therefore, somewhat foreign to the Moslem genius and, as might be expected, a great number of the men of science who flourished under the Arabs were not of Arab blood, but were Syrians, Persians or Jews.'¹¹¹⁴

And again:

'The Arabs gave high place to their physicians, who were usually of another race, Persian, Jew or Syrian Christian. They made very few original contributions to medicine but kept alive the knowledge of the Greeks and added little to it....'¹¹¹⁵

Meyers, too, writes:

'Furthermore, Islam ceased to make further progress in the sciences because it had reached the limit of its growth. Its greatness may have been due to intellectual precocity rather than to sustained leadership qualities; while Islam was still in its youth, it had the ingredients necessary for the phenomenal growth, but the days of exaltations had come to an end. Islam did not go beyond the achievements of Hellenistic mechanics; no new inventions of importance were made.'¹¹¹⁶

¹¹¹² J.Z. Wilczynski: *Sur le Darwinisme presume d'Al-Biruni 800 ans avant Darwin*; (Beyrouth, 1958); 23 p. Reviewed by J. Theodorides, *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences*: Vol 12: 1959; p. 278.

¹¹¹³ See: G. Sartori: *Introduction to the History of Science*; op cit; for appropriate entries.

¹¹¹⁴ F. Sherwood Taylor: *A Short History*; op cit; p.77.

¹¹¹⁵ Ibid; p.82.

¹¹¹⁶ E. A. Myers: *Arabic Thought and the Western World*; (Frederick Ungar Publishing, New York, 1964); p. 77.

The same argument is also used by Von Grunebaum:

‘The tolerant attitude of Islam to the foreign material and its powers of assimilation are likely to create the impression of lacking originality. But Islam's originality consists exactly in the capacity of adapting the alien inspiration to its needs, of re-creating in its own garb, and of rejecting the un-adaptable. Islam can hardly be called creative in the sense that the Greeks were creative in the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Or the Western world since the Renaissance, but its flavour is unmistakable on whatever it touched; and while very little of its conceptual and not too much of its emotional contribution is new or unique, its style of thought and range of feelings are without a real precedent.’¹¹¹⁷

These statements, and those similar, bear little resemblance to reality. This issue has been examined at great length in another work by this author.¹¹¹⁸ Furthermore, Islam's opening doors to the participation of other faiths, creeds and races, which is to its credit, highlighting the multi-cultural nature of Islamic civilisation, is instead used against it. The Islamic assimilation of the foreign elements cannot conceal the fact that for centuries, Muslims, from Spain to the frontiers of China, in their thousands, made independent breakthroughs in every science.¹¹¹⁹

When it is not plagiarised, Muslim science, it is held, was of a very mediocre standard. Hence, Sherwood Taylor:

‘Some of the works, such as the Canon of Avicenna, were excellent systematisations of what was then known, and, in Latin translation, they served Europe in the Middle Ages as standard medical text-books. A small amount of new matter appears; Rhazes wrote on small pox and measles which seems to be original.’¹¹²⁰

‘In astronomy, also, the Arabs, while they studied extensively, made little advance on the Greeks and did not put forward any view of the cosmos better than that of Ptolemy. They built larger and more accurate instruments, made many careful observations, calculated yet more accurate sets of astronomical tables, but found out no new principles.’¹¹²¹

¹¹¹⁷ G. E. Von Grunebaum: *Medieval Islam*, (The University of Chicago Press, 1954); p.324

¹¹¹⁸ S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Golden Age*; op cit;

¹¹¹⁹ See, for instance, G. Sarton: *Introduction*; op cit;

¹¹²⁰ F. Sherwood Taylor: *A Short History*; op cit; p.82.

¹¹²¹ Ibid; p.80.

Dietrich, too, says:

‘In the field of pharmacology, although their knowledge in this field, too, most certainly derived from Greek writings, especially the *Materia medica* of Dioscorides, the Muslims managed here to surpass their ancient models by far, for the simple reason that their broader geographical horizon, enormously extended by the Islamic conquests.’¹¹²²

And Garrison on medieval medical learning in France:

‘The way individual directives in training the student for the practice of his profession were wrong and wrong-headed at the start, even down to the time of Sydenham. Dominated by what Osler calls ‘The heavy hand of the Arabian.’¹¹²³

Sherwood Taylor, again:

‘From the last half of the 12th century onward the ancient learning which had been preserved in Arabic was translated from that language into Latin by Gerard of Cremona, Michael Scot, Ramon Lull and many others. This work put the world in possession of much of the classical learning, especially the complete works of Aristotle and the commentaries upon them written by the Arabs. It is true that the texts had suffered considerably by miscopying and by translation, in some case from Greek to Syriac, Syriac to Arabic, Arabic to Spanish, Spanish to Latin, but the flood of new knowledge was enough to inaugurate a new wave of learning.’¹¹²⁴

Nelson says:

‘In the case of Islam, how can we account for the fact that Islam was so far ahead of the west in 800, when Harun al-Rashid was caliph, while the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the west, Charlemagne, could not sign his own name; how did it turn out that there was an extraordinary thrust forward in the West, in the course of the 12th and 13th centuries, and yet again, it was the West, and not Islam, that proceeded to the scientific revolution?’¹¹²⁵

And Colish:

¹¹²² A Dietrich: Islamic sciences and the medieval West, Pharmacology in *Islam and the Medieval West*; I.K. Semaan; ed (State University of New York Press/Albany; 1980); pp 50-63; at p.50.

¹¹²³ F.H. Garrison: *Contributions to the History of Medicine*, (Library of Congress Catalogue, New York, 1966); p. 94.

¹¹²⁴ F. Sherwood Taylor: *A Short History*; op cit; p.93.

¹¹²⁵ In K. I. Semaan; ed: *Islam and the Medieval West*; op cit; p. 156.

‘Such is the assessment that a hypothetical traveller would probably have made, fresh from a tour of the cultural capitals of the Mediterranean world and northern Europe in the year 1100. Had such a traveller been asked to predict which of these societies (Byzantium, Europe, and Islam) would produce a scientific revolution in the seventeenth century and an Enlightenment in the 18th, chances are that he or she would have bet on Islam.’¹¹²⁶

Amongst the Muslims, in Western view, the Turks, most particularly, were unable to achieve anything of worth. This disparaging view of the Turks has been already considered in chapter three, and so, briefly here is an observation by Calvert who wrote:

‘In fact, even the most populated and advanced city of the Ottomans, Constantinople, has nothing one can enjoy in European capitals.’

Calvert provides a picture of this city with respect to what one cannot expect to find there:

‘Those who delight in fine paintings, carvings, fine furniture, Grecian architecture, the Roman classics, in the various labyrinths of medicine, in respect shown to them, in politeness, gallantry, gazettes, operas, plays, concerts, and assemblies; or those who would learn regular exercise from Prussian infantry, the admirable construction of French fortifications, the greatest science of navigation from an English navy, or profound knowledge in almost anything, will not find their account in this city.’¹¹²⁷

And just like with other Muslim accomplishments, what was credited to the Turks by earlier Western scholars was gradually removed as time passed. Now anything Turkish is below standard, poor, and barbaric. Baron Tott despised even the existing accomplishments admired in the previous centuries, as the symbols of Turkish despotism and ignorance. About Turkish architecture, he says:

‘One is astonished by the immensity of the work, one is out of patience at its imperfection; everything announces ignorance set in motion by force, and kept in it by avarice.’¹¹²⁸

¹¹²⁶ M.L. Colish: *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition 400-1400*: (Yale University Press; 1997); Introduction: xi.

¹¹²⁷ F. Calvert: *A Tour to the East...*; (London; 1767); p. 83.

¹¹²⁸ Baron F. Tott: *Memoirs of the Baron Tott on the Turks and the Tartars*; (London; 1785); p. 266.

Most of the 18th century writers claimed that whatever was said about the Turks' good qualities and virtues - such as honesty, sobriety, politeness-was wrong.¹¹²⁹

All these comments, like the vast amount of Western literature which demeans the Muslims and their accomplishments, are, of course, without foundation, for any student of Islamic science will find that modern sciences and civilisation are owed precisely to Islamic civilisation.¹¹³⁰ Had Muslim sciences been mediocre, they would never have delivered to us our modern civilisation as is acknowledged by studies which considered the Islamic influences.¹¹³¹ Moreover, whilst reading through Western derogatory depictions of anything Islamic, we come across a vast amount of contradictions. Muslim universities are thus said not to be universities, because they lacked a definite date and legal status in their foundation.¹¹³² Which is odd considering that neither were subsequent European universities, which were also based in every respect (organisation, administration, campus system, certificates, learning...) on Muslim antecedents.¹¹³³ The same is also said about Muslim chemistry, defined as occult practice, called alchemy, which is also odd when knowing that Western chemistry inherited everything (classification of metals, the use of experimentation, the vocabulary, the laboratory etc,) from its Islamic predecessor.¹¹³⁴ And the same with respect to the observatory in Islam, which is deemed not to be an

¹¹²⁹ See, for instance:

A. Hill: *A Full and just Account*; op cit; p. 72; W Eton: *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*; op cit; pp. 246-50; F. Tott: *Memoirs of the Baron Tott*; op cit; vol 1; pp. 18-21; etc,

¹¹³⁰ See, for instance:

-H. Terrasse: *L'Art Hispano-Mauresque des origines au 13em siecle*; (Paris; 1937).

-W.M. Watt: *The Influence of Islam on Medieval Europe*, (Edinburgh University Press, 1972).

-M. C. Welborn: 'Lotharingia as a center of Arabic and scientific influence in the eleventh century,' *ISIS* 16 (1931) pp.188-99.

¹¹³¹ See, for instance:

C. Burnett: *The Introduction of Arabic Learning into England*; The Panizzi Lectures, 1996. The British Library, London, 1997.

D. Campbell: *Arabian Medicine*; op cit

Maria Rosa Menocal: *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1987.

¹¹³² H. Rashdall: *The Universities of Europe in The Middle Ages*, ed F.M Powicke and A.G. Emden, 3 Vols (Oxford University Press, 1936).

¹¹³³ J. Ribera: *Dissertationes y opusculos*, 2 vols (Madrid, 1928).

George Makdisi: *The Rise of Humanism in Classical Islam and the Christian West* (Edinburgh University Press, 1990).

¹¹³⁴ E.J. Holmyard: *Makers of Chemistry* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1931).

observatory, when every single feature found in the Muslim observatory (use of large instruments, team work involving large numbers of scientists, prolonged observation, etc,) was to be found in its successor the Western observatory.¹¹³⁵ And the same is said and written with respect to Muslim hospitals, described as mere 'maristans',¹¹³⁶ when they were the essence and inspiration for modern hospitals.¹¹³⁷ Muslim civilisation, itself, is said to be a plagiarised form of Greek civilisation, when Islamic civilisation, as everyone can see by comparing the two, is essentially different from it, and addressed issues (whether in sciences, or with regard to the paper industry, gardening, universities, etc) which are alien to Greek civilisation.¹¹³⁸ Even the faith of Islam is said to be a mere corruption of other faiths,¹¹³⁹ when Islam, as everyone knows has fundamental differences with other faiths. And the same goes with respect to every other single accomplishment.

As for other specific criticisms such as that Islamic achievements in pharmacology are due to the Muslim large geographical mass rather than Muslim inventiveness, in truth, one of the main reasons science advanced in the Muslim world was due to experimentation, most particularly in both chemistry and pharmaceutical sciences.¹¹⁴⁰

With regard to the point that the 12th century translations from Arabic were of Greek learning, this is a great fallacy, for translations in the 12th century were mainly of Islamic works as can be easily seen from the inventory of such translations.¹¹⁴¹

¹¹³⁵ L. Sedillot: *Memoire sur les instruments astronomique des Arabes*, *Memoires de l'Academie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres de l'Institut de France* 1: 1-229 (Reprinted Frankfurt, 1985).

A. Sayili: *The Observatory in Islam* (Turkish Historical Society, Ankara, 1960).

¹¹³⁶ M.W. Dols: *Hospitals and Poor Relief*; *Dictionary of Middle Ages*; J.R.Strayer Editor in Chief; Charles Scribner's Sons; New York; 1980 ff; pp. 290-5; at p. 290.

¹¹³⁷ See, for instance: N.L. Leclerc: *Histoire de la Medecine Arabe*; 2 vols (Paris; 1876).

D. Campbell: *Arabian Medicine*; op cit.

¹¹³⁸ See, for instance:

-B. Hetherington: *A Chronicle of Pre-Telescopic Astronomy*; (John Wiley and Sons; Chichester; 1996).

-D.R. Hill: *Islamic Science and Engineering*, (Edinburgh University Press; 1993).

¹¹³⁹ As is found in literally every work on Islam, such as: C. Brockelmann: *History of the Islamic Peoples*; tr. from German (Routledge and Kegan Paul; London; 1950 reprint).

¹¹⁴⁰ See, for instance, R. Briffault: *The Making of Humanity*; op cit

¹¹⁴¹ See G. Sarton: *Introduction*; vol 2; op cit; for listing of medieval translations.

As for the points made by Nelson and Colish, and the countless others not cited here, most particularly in relation to the sudden emergence of sciences, they are wrong on the ground that revolutions, even political, have long antecedents and preparations. Furthermore, all great symbols of modern civilisation such as writing, the numerals, algebra, algorism, optics, paper manufacturing, universities, windmills, water wheels, gunpowder, the compass, mapping, observation, metal smelting, farming techniques, ship construction, urbanism, arts, architecture, literature...and hundreds more accomplishments did not wait until the 17th and 18th but appeared centuries before.¹¹⁴² Thus to say that the 17-18th centuries period is when it all began is historically untrue and nonsensical.

It is worth dwelling here on the matter of Muslim military victories to highlight the derogatory manner they are viewed by today's Western scholarship. These historians, generally, claim that huge Muslim armies won against much smaller forces, weakened by disease, or affected by one woe or another, which the Muslims exploited. Thus, the Muslim victory against the Mongols at Ain Jalut in 1260, which broke the deadly Mongol onslaught on Islam, was painted as a pale success against a handful of Mongols,¹¹⁴³ or was only a skirmish, says Saunders,¹¹⁴⁴ who oddly enough also says that it was a turning point in history, and that the Mamluk victory at Ain Jalut saved Islam.¹¹⁴⁵

Hillenbrand says:

‘On 19 February 1258: the Mongols sacked Baghdad and killed the Abbasid Caliph and on 3 September 1260, at the battle of Ayn Jalut, the Mamluks defeated a depleted Mongol army.’¹¹⁴⁶

Cahen on the same event:

¹¹⁴² See, for instance:

G.T. Emeagwali in *Science and Public Policy*; Journal of the International Science Policy Foundation, Surrey; UK; Vol 16; No 3; 1989;

<http://members.aol.com/Sekglo/racism.htm>

¹¹⁴³ G. Guzman: *Christian Europe and Mongol Asia: First Medieval Intercultural Contact Between East and West*; *Essays in Medieval Studies*, Volume 2; pp. 227- 44; at p. 233.

¹¹⁴⁴ J.J. Saunders: *The History of the Mongol Conquests* (Routledge & Kegan Paul; London; 1971), p. 117.

¹¹⁴⁵ J.J. Saunders: *Aspects of the Crusades*; University of Canterbury (Canterbury; 1962), pp.67; and p. 64. See also C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades*, op cit; the latter's depictions of Islamic military successes, as in p 574 fwd, are always against a weakened foe; often victories and successes only fruit of Islamic folk epic and imagination.

¹¹⁴⁶ C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades*, op cit; p. xlviii

‘In 1260, the small Mongol army lost in Palestine was crushed by the Mamluks.’¹¹⁴⁷

Some Western historians talk of a handful of Mongols; some others tell us it was just a patrol. Hence Amitai explains to us that the Mongols, under their general Kitbugha, were just grazing their herds, from time to time launching a local raid, and waiting for Hulagu.¹¹⁴⁸

Then, Amitai says:

‘The Mamluks, under the leadership of Sultan Qutuz and the Amir Baybars, wisely exploited the withdrawal of the majority of the Mongol forces from Syria and set off to attack Kitbuqa’s small army. This campaign ended in the total Mamluk victory on 25 Ramadan 658/3 September 1260.’¹¹⁴⁹

This story that the Muslims defeated a depleted Mongol army at Ain Jalut in 1260, which one finds in nearly every single Western work telling of the event, is ridiculous to say the least. Where has the Mongol army gone? Western historians tell us that after conquering Baghdad in 1258, Hulagu with his army returned home for the re-election of another Mongol leader, thus, making it seem that Hulagu had left the Muslim world altogether. In truth, Hulagu remained in Tabriz, which is only as far from Mosul as Aleppo.¹¹⁵⁰ His army was still active against the Muslim world from this very place.¹¹⁵¹ Thus, if it was true that only a small army was defeated at Ain Jalut, Hulagu could have returned with his supposed big army in the space of a few days to exact revenge on the Mamluks, instead, he expressed his anger at the defeat of the Mongol army and the death of his favourite general, Kitbugha, at Ain Jalut, by the execution of the Ayyubid ruler, al-Nasir, and his companions.¹¹⁵² And the defeat of the Mongols at Ain Jalut was not the only one, for after it, tens of battles took place between the Muslims and the Mongols until the early fourteenth century, and literally every battle was won by the Muslims, by Baybars, above all. And these facts are easy to find in any

¹¹⁴⁷ C. Cahen: *Orient et Occident au temps des Croisades*, (Aubier Montaigne, 1983); p.199.

¹¹⁴⁸ R. Amitai: Mongol raids into Palestine; Ad 1260-1300; in *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*; 1987; pp. 236-55.

¹¹⁴⁹ Ibid; p. 243.

¹¹⁵⁰ R.S. Humphreys: *From Saladin to the Mongols*; (State University of New York Press Albany; 1977); p.357; see the map of the region in the same work, inside cover, to appreciate how close is Tabriz to any Muslim centre of power, anywhere.

¹¹⁵¹ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p. 207.

¹¹⁵² R.S. Humphrey: *From Saladin*; pp. 359-60.

contemporary medieval chronicler, Muslim or Christian, or in old Western historical sources, such as d'Ohsson.¹¹⁵³

In another conflict, the Crusades (1095-1291), we read about the same 'Muslim military ineptness' according to Western authors such as Hillenbrand, who writes:

'The numbers of troops present at a certain battle are sometimes given in the Muslim chronicles, but these 'facts' are vague and unreliable. Even successful skirmishes against the Franks can be transformed into great victories by the simple device of grossly inflating the size of the enemy army and emphasising 'a brilliant performance on the battlefield by the greatly outnumbered but valiant Muslim soldiers, aided by God.'¹¹⁵⁴

And again:

'Almost all Crusader castles were built to withstand siege; Muslim castles were not- the Crusaders were always too few to inflict significant harm on them. A few men had to do the work of many on the Crusader side, whilst the Muslims were always plentiful in number. Given this fundamental difference of approach and function between Crusader and Muslim castles, it is unlikely that the Muslims would feel the need to make significant borrowings in the art of castle fortification from the Crusaders, even though the Crusader castles were manifestly superior in design and execution.'¹¹⁵⁵

We are constantly reminded by Hillenbrand (in a book supposedly biased in favour of the Muslims) that the Muslims fought an enemy many times their inferior in number; and that Muslim victories were only minor gains in skirmishes. Somehow, the crusaders died by themselves, or just faded away, which explains the Muslim final victory over them in 1291. Had Hillenbrand looked closely at the facts, she would have realised that the crusaders who attacked the Muslim world over the two centuries (1095-1291) were in their millions.¹¹⁵⁶ Had she looked at the contemporary chroniclers such as William of Tyre, Froissart, Fulcher of Chartres, they would have given her the same facts on the huge crusade armies.¹¹⁵⁷ Had she bothered to consider the impact of Western preachers for the

¹¹⁵³ G. d'Ohsson: *Histoire des Mongols*: (La Haye et Amsterdam; 1834); Vol 3; pp. 340 ff.

¹¹⁵⁴ C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades*, op cit; p.433.

¹¹⁵⁵ Ibid; p.467.

¹¹⁵⁶ J.J. Saunders: *Aspects of the Crusades*, op cit; S. Runciman: *History of the Crusades*; op cit;

¹¹⁵⁷ Outlined in J.A.Brundage: *The Crusades*; (The Marquette University Press); 1962.

crusades, such as St Bernard, whose preaching emptied European towns and cities of men of fighting ability, who all went to fight in the East, she would have come again to the same conclusion, of literally millions of men fighting on the crusader side.¹¹⁵⁸ There was scarcely a Christian family that did not take part in the crusades, particularly when it is considered that between the principal crusades numerous smaller expeditions were organised.¹¹⁵⁹ Figures also clearly show that the entire body of knights of Western Europe was involved in the crusade movement for generations.¹¹⁶⁰ The army of Richard Coeur de Lion, alone, which was carried by the English fleet, needed one hundred merchant ships and twenty warships.¹¹⁶¹ And his army was one of at least four large Christian armies which left for the East in that third crusade (1190). One can also cite at random the many instances indicating huge crusading armies arriving in the East. The armies which arrived in 1100 and 1101 were nearly half a million strong.¹¹⁶² The powerful army which followed Frederick of Swabia by the coast road to Acre counted 200,000 men.¹¹⁶³ The army at Acre in 1191 is said to have numbered three hundred thousand men.¹¹⁶⁴ And there were constant reinforcements of men and equipment, uninterrupted, throughout the period, including reinforcements by fighting pilgrims. Forces arrived from all parts of Europe, in 1217, for instance, the Hungarians left Spalatro in Venetian ships, while others came from Brindisi, Marseilles, and Genoa.¹¹⁶⁵ In 1218, Frisians arrived from Cologne and the Rhine.¹¹⁶⁶ Thus a continuous outpouring of men. It is also, in total, up to six million crusaders who perished in the East.¹¹⁶⁷ When Hillenbrand says that the crusaders were never many to mount a siege except at Damascus, she is completely wrong. During the first crusade, the crusaders besieged Muslim towns and fortifications everywhere: Antioch, Ma'rat al'Numan, Jerusalem, etc., and always with forces much larger than the Muslims'.

¹¹⁵⁸ Ibid; pp. 90-2.

¹¹⁵⁹ M. Erbstosser: *The Crusades*; David and Charles; Newton Abbot; (First pub: Leipzig; 1978); p. 161.

¹¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁶¹ Ibid; p. 160-1.

¹¹⁶² Z. Oldenbourg: *The Crusades*; op cit; p. 174.

¹¹⁶³ Jeoff. De Vinsauf, I, Chs. 14-7; Jacques de Vitry, p. 103. English tr. in C. R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*; (The Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund; London; 1897); p. 255.

¹¹⁶⁴ C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom*; p. 274.

¹¹⁶⁵ Ibid; p. 308.

¹¹⁶⁶ Ibid; p. 309.

¹¹⁶⁷ S.P. Scott: *History of the Moorish Empire*; op cit; vol 3; p. 680.

It is not just the fallacies that one finds, it is, as any one can check, the extraordinary contradictions one finds, on the one hand telling of small numbers of crusaders, and then a few paragraphs away, the same work speaks of constant massive crusader arrivals. Thus, Hillenbrand, after telling us how small the numbers of the crusaders were, still refers to sources that note the very opposite, such as that during the fourth crusade:

‘The fleets of the Franks appeared at the port of Constantinople with 300,000 men and their kings were six.’¹¹⁶⁸

And it is not just the Muslim source which relates such high numbers, but also all contemporary sources whether Latin Christian or Greek.

Deriding Muslim victories was also applied to the Ottomans. As Schwoebel points out:

‘Few, if any of the chroniclers of the event (capture of Constantinople) attributed the Turkish victory directly to the well-organised, highly disciplined, and amply supported army of Mohammed II; and yet such a conclusion was implicit in all the more accurate accounts of the battle, as well as from the great alarm which spread throughout the West with the news of the tragedy. It was consistent with the character of the times to emphasise the negative aspects of any great happening. It was assuredly contrary to ingrained tradition to praise the merits of any infidel.’¹¹⁶⁹

Schwoebel also notes:

‘There is an obvious contradiction between the facts they (writers on the Turks) present and the conclusions they draw. Their preconceived notions of the Turks as infidels and enemies of the faith, and therefore cruel and inhumane savages, were only confirmed by the sack which followed the Turks’ victorious entrance into Constantinople. If the Turks were barbarians, it followed that they must be inferior to civilised Europeans on all counts; and in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, even the military abilities of the Turks were disparaged. The appraisal of the Turks which Aeneas Sylvius gave in an oration delivered before the Roman curia in 1452 was frequently repeated. ‘They are,’ he declared, ‘unwarlike, weak, effeminate,

¹¹⁶⁸ Al-Azimi; p.372; in C.Hillenbrand: *The Crusades, Islamic Perspectives*, op cit; p.54.

¹¹⁶⁹ R. Schwoebel: *The Shadow*; op cit; p 18.

neither martial in spirit, nor in counsel; their spoils were taken without sweat or blood.¹¹⁷⁰

And finally, the BBC in a programme charting the history of the 20th century, broadcast in the mid 1990s, referred to the Algerian war of independence (1954-62) in a clip no longer than one minute and scenes of mules carrying weapons through the mountains. Yet, in reality, with the Vietnam Wars, the Algerian war remains, by far, the greatest war of liberation in history.

¹¹⁷⁰ Ibid; p 19; Aeneas ref: Oratio; ed Dethier; *Monumenta Hungarie Historica*; p. I; no 13; p. 639.

4. The Muslim as ‘an Irrational, Unruly, Fanatic’

In the Western view, it is Islam which is the principal reason why the Muslim is incapable of reasoning or thinking at higher levels, besides spurring a culture of fanaticism and chaos within Muslim society.

‘Muslim Irrationality and Fanaticism’:

From a number of sources, Lueg outlines the generalized perception that the Muslim is naturally inclined to lean towards irrationality, fanaticism, and the acceptance of violent despotism:

‘Three out of four French people questioned thought that the word ‘fanatical’ best applied to Islam.’¹¹⁷¹

Lueg continues:

‘Unpredictable passions’ seethe in the ‘fanatical masses’. For us (Westerners), fanaticism is a particularly negative and in certain circumstances even dangerous quality with a pathological ring to it, that could easily turn into madness - the exact opposite, then, to the way we like to see ourselves: as sober and rational. A fanatic or zealot cannot think clearly or act rationally. For many authors, irrationality is an almost essential quality of Muslims.’¹¹⁷²

But even many experts impute a strange way of thinking to Muslims or Arabs (these words are often implicitly equated). ‘Conspiracy theories aren’t unusual in the Arab world... I have repeatedly found myself sitting in living rooms and book-lined offices, listening to scholars, businessmen or politicians weave surreal scenarios’, explains Ethan Bronner under the revealing headline Psycho-Semitic.¹¹⁷³

Even the former US ambassador to the UN, Jean Kirkpatrick, questions the ability of Arabs to reach rational decisions:

‘The Arab world is the only part of the world where I’ve been shaken in my conviction that if you let the people decide, they will make fundamentally rational decisions.’¹¹⁷⁴

¹¹⁷¹ ‘Mit Kopftuch in die Schule,’ (Frankfurter Rundschau, 7 December 1992).

¹¹⁷² A. Lueg: The Perception of Islam; op cit; pp. 16-7.

¹¹⁷³ E. Bronner: Psycho-Semitic,’ *New Republic*; 24 May 1993; p. 17.

¹¹⁷⁴ Quote taken from M. Kramer: Islam versus Democracy, *Commentary*; Vol 95; No1; pp. 35-42; at p. 37.

The Arab political scientist Bassam Tibi, likewise, makes it sound as if the people of the Middle East were addicted to oppression:

‘The Arab masses follow their dictators and despots till they are bitterly disappointed; they must first undergo painful periods of self-deception before they finally do realise that they have been deceived. However, they do not learn their lesson; though they let their heroes fall, they again pledge allegiance to the next dictator. This is a characteristic of the political culture of the Middle East.’¹¹⁷⁵

[Lueg refutes these claims:]

‘This image of masochist Arab masses, who refuse to learn, is not only simplistic, it is also entirely false. Just as in the West, people in the Middle East have no desire to be oppressed.’

[However, as she concludes:]

‘The stereotype of a supposed irrationality in Islamic countries sharpens the polarisation between East and West. The modern West is sensible, the backward East more or less crazy. As a result it is necessarily impossible for the last to be an equal and valid interlocutor. Mad men are unpredictable and dangerous. One cannot have an equal relationship with them, it is better to keep oneself at a distance from them.’¹¹⁷⁶

Lueg also notes how ‘the Western notion of “the enemy” is about clearly marking out the divisions and creating a scheme which distinguishes friend from foe.’¹¹⁷⁷ First of all this means that the enemy must be *different* from us:

‘Most Islamic countries in the Middle East live according to a world of associations which cannot be judged by European standards, a world of bazaars, mosques and the apparatus of repression’.¹¹⁷⁸

Liminski here paints a picture of a structure that is difficult to see through and thus hides Western insecurity. According to this scheme, the West is progressive, rational, enlightened and secular. Islam is backward, fanatical, irrational and fundamentalist.¹¹⁷⁹

¹¹⁷⁵ B. Tibi: *Über die Schwierigkeiten der Europaer arabische Politik zu verstehen*; in G. Stein Ed: *Nachgedanken zum Golfkrieg*; (Heidelberg; 1991); pp. 97-107; at pp. 102-3.

¹¹⁷⁶ A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; pp. 16-7.

¹¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*; p. 21.

¹¹⁷⁸ J. Liminski: *Europas bedrohung durch den islamischen Radikalismus*; *Das Parlament*; Nos 3-4; January 1992.

¹¹⁷⁹ Liminski in A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; p. 21.

This 'Muslim irrationalism and intellectual inertia' have been 'explained' by Western 'intellectuals' for a long time already. According to the 18th century French thinker, Montesquieu:

'The princes of the East are always kept ignorant... as soon as they have chosen a vizier and abandoned themselves in their seraglio to the most brutal passions, pursuing in the midst of a prostituted court every capricious extravagance, they would never have dreamed they could find matters so easy.

In fact, the prince becomes the first prisoner of the palace; a slave like his subjects, he is concealed and confined in his palace governed by wrath and vengeance, treachery and deceit.... Since the principle of the regime is fear, education is necessarily servile and aims to debase the mind in order to attain tranquillity.'¹¹⁸⁰

Furthermore, in Muslim countries religion helps to maintain peace and passive obedience on the part of the subjects. For instance in Turkey, according to Montesquieu's imagination, the subjects have no attachment of honour to the glory and grandeur of the state; rather they associate themselves with the state through the force and principle of religion. Since they have neither honour nor virtue, they act upon "the hope of the conveniences of life."¹¹⁸¹ Montesquieu also concludes that despotic government is suitable for 'Mahommedans' whilst a moderate government is most proper to the Christian religion.¹¹⁸²

Montesquieu's French colleague, Boulanger, follows on roughly the same lines in explaining Muslim failure and inferiority, blaming it on the theocratic nature of Islamic society. He argues that theocracy leads to idolatry that makes man a slave. This voluntary servitude is based on the belief that it is a duty to honour the deity and monarch by degrading oneself before them.¹¹⁸³ Thus, according to Boulanger, man ceased to consult his reason and submitted himself to idolatry:

'He imagined a special order, or particular advice from heaven, necessary for the rule of his conduct, enterprise and every transaction of life; and the priests had assumed to themselves the office of intermediate organs between heaven

¹¹⁸⁰ Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws*; op cit; p. 18; in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; pp. 120..

¹¹⁸¹ Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws*; op cit; p. 67.

¹¹⁸² Ibid; vol 2; p. 29.

¹¹⁸³ N. Boulanger: *The Origin and Progress of Despotism*; Tr. J. Wilkes; London; (Amsterdam; 1764); in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 124.

and earth, all the nations dwindled into their slaves, their victims and their dupes.¹¹⁸⁴

Idolatry induced despotism, regardless of climate and geography, once a theocracy was established. Thus, one may suppose, as it is implied, that this sort of despotism once ruled in Europe too and somehow Europeans emancipated themselves and became free and rational individuals again. However, the horrible servitude of men in the East continued to exist because it also sprang from the “imbecility of nations” and superstition.¹¹⁸⁵ When people started to demand too much from their sovereigns, they obtained nothing and despotism became an unlimited authority.¹¹⁸⁶

Boulanger gives a striking example of this unlimited authority and the extent of the voluntary servitude of Asians:

‘The Turks are bred up in a nation, that their Sultan may, without committing a sin, put fourteen persons to death every day. They believe, that when their sovereign orders any of his subjects to suffer death, he only follows the special inspirations of providence, which to resist would be criminal.’¹¹⁸⁷

Both Montesquieu’s and Boulanger’s definition of despotism as an inherently Oriental rule, due to climatic and theological reasons, became a landmark verdict on the nature of Eastern societies.¹¹⁸⁸

Of course Muslim irrationality is a huge fallacy. It was, in fact the Muslims who led the Christian West to adopt reason in place of superstition. The earliest Western scholar, championing the use of reason was Adelard of Bath. In his wide travels¹¹⁸⁹ and in his translations from Arabic, he exemplifies another phase of the awakening intellectual life of the age, a turning to Muslim literature for new sources of information and inspiration beyond the standard and easily available collections of classical, Scriptural, and patristic authorities.¹¹⁹⁰ His major work, *Quaestiones Naturales*, fights the claim of authority in

¹¹⁸⁴ N. Boulanger: *The Origin*; p. 112.

¹¹⁸⁵ Boulanger in A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 124.

¹¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁸⁷ N. Boulanger: *The Origin*; op cit; p. 158.

¹¹⁸⁸ In A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 125.

¹¹⁸⁹ *De eodem et diverso* indicates that Adelard had already visited Salerno and Sicily; in the *Quaestiones*, Adelard mentions Tarsus and Antioch as places where he had been. In J.K. Wright: *The Geographical Lore of the Time of the Crusades*, (Dover Publications; New York; 1925); p. 92.

¹¹⁹⁰ J.K. Wright: *The Geographical Lore*; op cit; p. 92.

defence of the 'moderns'. Adelard attributes to his Islamic teachers a new attitude of mind:

'I with reason for my guide have learned one thing from my Arab teachers - you [are] something different - dazzled by the outward show of authority you wear a headstall, for what else would we call authority but a headstall? Just as brute animals are led by headstalls where one pleases so many of you are led into danger by the authority of writers...' ¹¹⁹¹

Such eagerness and faith in human reason found fitting expression in his words:

'If reason be not the universal arbiter, it is given to each of us in vain.' ¹¹⁹²

Adelard contrasts the use of reason and professionalism in the Arab world with France, which seemed to him not only ignorant but amateur. ¹¹⁹³ In the *Quaestiones Naturales* which he composed in praise of Islamic learning, he expresses his excitement at the new scientific outlook of the 'Arabs which had left the Latin schools far behind.' ¹¹⁹⁴

On Adelard's overall contribution, Stock observes:

'What we must be grateful for is that among a number of scholars who brought scientific information to the attention of the Latin West Adelard took the initiative not only in translating Arabic works but in recording their usefulness and developing the reasoning on which they were based.' ¹¹⁹⁵

More of such Islamic influences in stimulating the use of reason in the West have been explained elsewhere and warrant no more space here. ¹¹⁹⁶

'Muslim Love for Chaos':

The Western view which purports Muslim fanaticism and love for chaos is another fallacy. The modern day chaos that can be seen in many parts of the Muslim world is precisely the result of de-Islamising Muslim society as has also been explained elsewhere in greater

¹¹⁹¹ L. Cochrane: *Adelard of Bath*; (British Museum Press, 1994); p.43

¹¹⁹² G. Wiet et al: *History*; op cit; p.465.

¹¹⁹³ In. N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit; p.268.

¹¹⁹⁴ D. Metlitzki: *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England*, (Yale University Press, 1977); p. 29.

¹¹⁹⁵ *Quaestiones*, ch vi, on why man must use reason with which he is endowed, Gollancz p. 98; Muller, p. 11. in L. Cochrane: *Adelard of Bath*; op cit; p. 108

¹¹⁹⁶ S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Hidden Debt*; op cit;

detail.¹¹⁹⁷ Western rhetoric, moreover, has exaggerated the negative sides of Muslim society precisely to justify Western colonisation. In this context, the Western occupier assigned to himself the duty 'to correct Islamic society,' despite the arduousness of the task. Thus, Stoddard, for instance, writes:

'It must be remembered that most Orientals either do not recognise much benefit in European rule, or, even though they recognise considerable benefits, consider these more than offset by many points which, in their eyes, are maddening annoyances or burdens. The very things which we most pride ourselves on having given the Orient - peace, order, justice, security, are not valued by the Oriental anywhere near as highly as we might expect. Of course, he likes these things, but he would prefer to get less of them if what he did get was given by native rulers, sharing his prejudices and point of view... Take order: the average Oriental not only does not appreciate, but detests, our well-regulated, systematic manner of life. Accustomed as he has been for centuries to a slipshod, easy-going existence, in which, if there was much injustice, there was also much favouritism, he instinctively hates things like sanitary measures and police regulations. Accustomed to a wide personal liberty in the anarchical sense, he is not willing to limit this liberty for the common weal. He wants his own way, even though it involves possible dangers to himself, dangers which may always be adverted by bribery, favouritism and violence.... The fact is that the majority of Orientals, despite the considerable penetration of Western ideas and methods that has been going on for the (colonial) century, still love their old ruts and hate to be budged out of them. They realise that Western rule furthers more than anything else the Westernisation of their social system, their traditional manner of life, and they therefore tend to react fanatically against it.'¹¹⁹⁸

Stoddard's thoughts are echoed by a proponent of Western colonisation, the Frenchman Louis Bertrand:

'In reality, all these peoples, indisposed as they are by their traditions, customs and climates to live according to our social ideal, hate to endure the constraint of our police, of our

¹¹⁹⁷ S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Golden Age*; op cit; part one;

¹¹⁹⁸ L. Stoddard: *The New World of Islam*; op cit; pp. 93-5.

administration - in a word, of any sort of regulated government, no matter how just and honest. Delivered from the most anarchic and vexatious of tyrannies, they remain in spirit more or less like our vagabonds... In vain do we point out to the Arabs of North Africa that, thanks to the protection of France, they are no longer pillaged by Turkish despots nor massacred and tortured by rival tribes... But it is not merely our municipal and administrative regulations which they find unsupportable; it is all our habits, taken en bloc - in a word, the order which regulates our civilised life.... What is certain is that these peoples do not yet understand what we mean by exactitude, and that the concept of a well regulated existence has not yet penetrated their heads.'¹¹⁹⁹

Stoddard, again:

'In the Orient, the favourite stories are those narrating sudden and amazing shifts of fortune - beggars become viziers or viziers become beggars, and all in a single night. To the majority of Orientals it is still the uncertainties of life, and the capricious favour of the powerful, which make it most worth living; not the sure reward of honesty and well regulated labour.'¹²⁰⁰

And again:

'The East has its special faults, and it is the faults, which for the last thousand of years, have been gaining on virtues, resulting in backwardness, stagnation, and inferiority. Today, the East is being penetrated - and quickened by the West. The outcome will never be completed Westernisation in the sense of a mere wholesale copying and absolute transformation; the East will always remain fundamentally itself. But it will be a new self, the result of a true assimilation of Western ideas. The reactionaries (i.e. the religious groups and classes) can only delay this process, and thereby prolong the Orient's inferiority and weakness.'¹²⁰¹

Stoddard continues to explain why the West has the right to rule the East:

'The reality is that, whatever the future may bring, the European first established himself in the Orient because the West was then infinitely ahead of the East; and is still there

¹¹⁹⁹ L. Bertrand: *Le Mirage Oriental*; Paris; 1910; pp. 441-2.

¹²⁰⁰ L. Stoddard: *The New World of Islam*; op cit; p. 97.

¹²⁰¹ Ibid; p. 90.

today because, despite all recent changes, the East is still behind the West. Therefore the European in the Orient is still the ruler, and so long as he stays there must continue to rule - justly, temperately, with political regard for Eastern progress and liberal devolution of power as the East becomes ripe for its liberal exercise - but, nevertheless, rule.'¹²⁰²

Stoddard quotes in agreement Cromer:

'In governing Oriental races the first thought must be what is good for them, but not necessarily what they think is good for them.'¹²⁰³

Likewise, a high French colonial official, Mercier, wrote:

'Our natives (in North Africa) need to be governed. They are children, incapable of going alone. We should guide them firmly, stand no nonsense from them, and crush intrigues and agents of sedition. At the same time, we should protect them, direct them paternally, and especially obtain influence over them by the constant example of our moral superiority. Above all: no vain humanitarian illusions, both in the interest of France and of the natives themselves.'¹²⁰⁴

These views will be amply refuted in the final chapter dealing with colonisation. The killing, the mass starvation of millions of Muslims and the financial ruin of Muslim society caused by Western colonisation will be some of the issues raised in that particular chapter. Briefly here, on the civilisation, order, and paternal direction brought by French colonisation to her subjects in North Africa, and the example of her moral superiority, here is one of the French voices, Toqueville, who acknowledged in 1847:

'Everywhere we have laid our hands on the revenues [from pious foundations providing for charity or education], largely diverting them from their original purpose. We have cut down the number of charities, let schools fall into ruin, closed the colleges. Around us the lights have gone out, the recruitment of men of religion and men of law has ceased. We have, in other words, made Muslim society far more miserable,

¹²⁰² Ibid; pp. 101-2.

¹²⁰³ Cromer: Political and Literary Essays; p. 25; in L. Stoddard: *The New World*; op cit; p. 102.

¹²⁰⁴ E. Mercier: *La Question Indigene*; (Paris; 1901); p. 230.

disorganised, ignorant and barbarous than ever it was before it knew us.¹²⁰⁵

The View On Western Superiority Today:

Obviously the colonial venture failed to rid Islamic society of its 'fanatical irrationalism' and bring it civilisation as the same onslaught proceeds today. The Frenchman Jean Claude Barreau states:

'The Islamic militants do not understand what is going on. They do not realise that they have been beaten by a modernity whose rationality is superior to the Muslim one.' The rationally superior modernity is not only the West that overcame the Orient, in the person of Napoleon in Egypt in July 1798, but the West that has been doing so ever since.¹²⁰⁶

For Bernard Lewis:

'It should now be clear that we are facing a mood and a movement far transcending the level of issues and policies and the governments that pursue them. This is no less than a clash of civilizations - the perhaps irrational but surely historic reaction of an ancient rival (Islam) against our Judaeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both.'¹²⁰⁷

According to Barreau, again, this is how it will be in the future:

'They can buy modern weapons and even deploy them, but the victories of the West are not dependent on the quality of weapons alone, but rather on the "system" of its organisation.'¹²⁰⁸

Lueg notes how it was perceived in the West that:

'In the Gulf War, Western dominance was demonstrated in its ability to kill more efficiently. At the same time, it was possible to justify the military action and the many victims of this war more easily by using an image of people in Islamic countries as inferior to us and therefore of less value. 'We caught them with their pants down. They were still in their sleeping bags. It was just like shooting turkeys' was how the

¹²⁰⁵ C. Ageron: *Modern Algeria*, tr by M. Brett (Hurst and Company, London, 1990), p.21.

¹²⁰⁶ J.C. Barreau: *De L'Islam en General*; in A. Lueg: *The Perception*; op cit; p. 21.

¹²⁰⁷ B. Lewis: *Roots of Muslim Rage*; op cit; p. 60.

¹²⁰⁸ J.C. Barreau: *De L'Islam en General*; in A. Lueg: *The Perception*; op cit; p. 21.

American company commander Jess Fairington expressed himself after a helicopter gunship attack on Iraqi positions during the Gulf War.¹²⁰⁹

Cox and Marks highlight 'Western superiority' by comparing both societies Western and Islamic in relation to the concepts of knowledge and truth and the kinds of institutions needed to promote and preserve them:

- In Western societies truth about any subject is sought in universities and elsewhere by experts who use all available evidence, logical argument, public debate and criticism to arrive at their always provisional conclusions. These conclusions - and the tentative ethos which created them are transmitted to the next generation through education. One aim is to produce autonomous individuals who can think for themselves in a spirit of academic criticism and self-criticism.
- In traditional Islamic and Islamist societies truth is the word of Allah as revealed to his Prophet Mohammed and recorded in the Koran together with the sayings and actions of the Prophet as recorded in the *hadith* and *sunnah*. This is interpreted and transmitted during education and later by the '*ulema* - the experts in these matters. The aim is to produce truly Islamic devout Muslims. One result is some inhibition of critical free individual enquiry.
- These radically different epistemological and philosophical approaches to the concepts of truth and knowledge underpin and shape the very different social and political structures in Western societies, compared with traditional Islamic and Islamist societies.¹²¹⁰

Of course, all these claims, just like other derogatory depictions of Islam and Muslims, have a multiplicity of objectives which will be amply looked at in the final chapter of this work. They are, most of all, utterly removed from the reality of Islam. Contrary to what Cox and Marks assert, it was in the Christian West where countless numbers of people were burnt at the stake for their heresy, not in the Islamic world.¹²¹¹ The Inquisition was a medieval Christian institution, not an

¹²⁰⁹ Die Zeit: No 10; 1 March 1991; p. 2; In A. Lueg: The Perception; p. 21.

¹²¹⁰ C. Cox-J. Marks: *The West, Islam*; op cit; p. 78.

¹²¹¹ See

-J.W. Draper: *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*; op cit.

Islamic one.¹²¹² It was (and this is needless to repeat here as this has been amply discussed by this author elsewhere) the 'theocratic' Islamic state that spurred science, learning and civilisation to a level no other state did before, in fact dragging Arab society from an age of utter ignorance and barbarism into a state, power and civilisation that then ruled the world.¹²¹³ It was precisely that very Islamic civilisation that dragged the Christian West out of barbarism as already explained above, and as can be found in a variety of sources.¹²¹⁴

It is also misplaced of modern Western writers and observers to attribute present day chaos, deficiencies and weaknesses, including military, to Islam. These woes cannot be attributed to Islam, when this faith is not in power today. It can, instead, be argued, that they are only a legacy of the Western cure administered to Islamic societies for the last few centuries, beginning with the 'enlightenment and civilisation' brought by Western colonialism. The looting and destruction of Muslim society by Western colonial 'enlightenment' will be considered in the final chapter. Muslim society today with its ills does not resemble Muslim society before it knew the West. One only needs to look at Somalia in 2006-7 to understand how in place of the Islamic Courts that brought order and peace to the country, Western/US intervention, direct and via proxies, brought back the chaos, rape and mayhem preceding such courts. Never would it, indeed, occur to Western masters lecturing the Muslims on what type of society they should have, that the Muslims much prefer to live in a stable, safe country (and accept the deficiencies that seem to bother the

-J.W. Draper: *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*; Henry S. King & Co; London; 1875.

¹²¹² H. C. Lea: *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*; op cit

¹²¹³ S.E. Al-Djazairi: *The Golden Age*; op cit.

¹²¹⁴ See, for instance:

-T. Arnold and A. Guillaume ed: *The Legacy of Islam*, (Oxford University Press, 1931).

-R. Briffault: *The Making of Humanity*, op cit.

-C. Burnett: *The Introduction of Arabic Learning into England*; op cit.

-J.W. Draper: *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, op cit; vol 2 in particular.

-D.R. Hill: *Islamic Science and Engineering*, op cit.

-A. Mieli: *La Science Arabe et son role dans l'evolution scientifique mondiale*. (Leiden; E.J. Brill, 1966).

-R. Rashed: *Encyclopaedia of the History of Arabic Science*, in 3 Vols; ed R. Rashed; (Routledge, London and New York: 1996).

-G. Sarton: *Introduction*; op cit.

-S.P. Scott: *History of the Moorish Empire*; op cit.

-John Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession*; op cit.

The Depiction of The Muslim as an Inferior

Westerners) than suffer in a 'modern-free' country ruled by war-lords, mass murderers and torturers, drug traffickers, and rapists.

Seven

BARBARISM: CONFLICT BETWEEN RHETORIC AND REALITY

When it comes to Islamic misdeeds, and above all Islamic violence and terror, Western opinion-making in all its forms, whether media, fiction, academia, or commentators, lose all their sense of judgment and reason, and promote and stir the most incredible stories of Islamic evil. Here are recent instances of the bombardment of opinion depicting Muslims as barbaric fiends, in a place, Iraq, where they, the Muslims, are themselves being killed in their tens of thousands. These are extracts from *The Independent*, one of the few readable papers. In the first report, extracts say:

‘As Islamic militancy increases, women find it more dangerous not to wear a veil in Sunni and Shia neighbourhoods. One was warned not to drive a car. Others were told to cover their faces and to stop using mobile phones. Threats against women who do not accept this second-class status have escalated in the last two months. It has also become dangerous for men to wear shorts or jeans in public, or for children to play outside wearing shorts.’¹²¹⁵

The same sense of Islamic barbarity resurfaces four days later in a report in the same daily, when the sad plight of an Iraqi woman is told. The article, amongst others, says:

‘Her husband) was dragged from his car by insurgents, tortured, mutilated and murdered-his body left at the road side.... He was a rare man in Iraq. He treated her like an equal...

With the re-introduction of Islamic tradition of passing a man’s wealth to surviving male members of his family, she could have been left penniless. Even in her own home she must always wear black and knows she will suffer the wrath of militants if she

¹²¹⁵ P. Cockburn: Leaked memo reveals plight of Iraqis; *The Independent*; 20 June 06; p. 2.

disobeys. The few hours a week she emerges are to teach but she has been told she must give up her job.¹²¹⁶

The same heavily laden depictions of Muslim barbarism dominate in every single issue, and in respect to everything the newspaper writes about Islam, even in articles when praise is supposedly given to Islam and Muslims.

Once more, one insists, *The Independent* is by far the best Western newspaper, and its attitude to Muslims is by far the least hostile one can find in the West, and yet, it cannot rid itself of the generalised inherent bias against Islam. Westerners (with few exceptions), even amongst the best reporters and writers, cannot do away with such hostility, which blinds them to even basic truths as in the case of the above reports. First, it never occurred to *The Independent* journalist that anyone in the chaos of Iraq can issue any order to kill, kidnap, maim, etc. It does not occur to these journalists that this is the sort of story meant to discredit the resistance, the other technique being the senseless, barbaric execution of hostages and other prisoners by masked men (who can be anybody) claiming to be Islamic militants. It never occurs to Western reporters that the so-called civil war taking place in Iraq is the most tragic-farcical civil war ever to take place on the face of the planet, two foes who instead of shooting at each other openly only mass slaughter one another via secret death groups. The mass slaughters in Iraq never raised a single question in the minds of our 'able, honest' Western reporters that such mass killings are precisely of the groups and individuals opposed to occupation. It never occurred to *The Independent* journalists and others that what they are saying runs in contradiction with everything else we hear from Iraq: that Western journalists cannot tell us what's going on there because they cannot leave the Green Zone.¹²¹⁷ So how could the *Independent* journalists relate these stories confidently from behind the walls of the Green Zone, and from even further distances? Even if it was the case that some intimidation took place by some individuals, why should this be generalised to all Islamic militants, and to taint Islam? Finally, why do we very rarely hear of the real crimes Iraqis are being victims of, such as the flattening of whole towns and cities beyond the view of cameras, the mass extra-judicial killings perpetrated in secret

¹²¹⁶ T. Judd: A Woman without a man is like a tree without water; in *The Independent* Saturday 24 June; 06; p. 23.

¹²¹⁷ See the latest on this matter in *The Guardian* March 12, 07; p.3 of Media Section.

places, the works of the secret death squads masquerading as Shia and Sunni extremist groups, and so on and so forth?¹²¹⁸

These questions raise one fundamental problem that one only hears one side of every story: i.e. the beastly nature of Islam and Islamists, and any such depiction of the beast is the only truth. The usual good critical sense of the Westerners, who go to extremes to unravel any evidence to destroy anything positive about Islam, such as seen in their suppression of Islamic accomplishments in sciences, suddenly deserts them, and with rare exceptions, they become impotent, incapable of any critical judgment when the story, instead, depicts Islamic barbarism.

Just as it is keen to enhance Islamic crimes, most of Western opinion-making is all too keen to suppress Western crimes from knowledge, using a number of methods and techniques that will be looked at further on in this chapter. Briefly cited here is the instance of the much-publicised recent historical programme on Channel Four, *The War of the Worlds*, broadcast on 19 June 2006,¹²¹⁹ the presenter, in the first episode, inflates the barbaric side of the Turks, using extremely emotive language. In the process, he, a university professor, left countless gaps. For instance, he refers to the First World War, but hardly speaks of the mass slaughter of entire populations by Western armies. He speaks of the Senegalese and Indochinese forced to fight the war of the West but ignores altogether the millions of Muslims incorporated by force to fight and die on behalf of France and Britain. He refers to the Turkish genocide of Christians, inflating the figures and atrocities at will, but not once did he refer to the mass slaughter of millions of Muslims and their expulsion from the Balkan regions during the Balkan Wars preceding the First World War.¹²²⁰ Nor does he refer to the Russian elimination of millions of Muslims from the southern parts of Russia. Never, of course, would he or other historians (with few exceptions) tell us about the recent colonial wars, which eliminated millions of Muslims, Algeria being one good instance of this, 10 million Algerians at least having been exterminated by the French directly, or indirectly such as by induced starvation between 1830 and 1962.¹²²¹ He, like all the rewriters of history, never

¹²¹⁸ With rare exceptions such as: R. Fisk: Who knows how many atrocities have been committed; *The Independent*; 3 June; 2006; pp. 1-2.

S. Ramadani: Iraqis told them to go from day one; in *The Guardian*; 9 April; 04.

¹²¹⁹ Channel Four: *The War of the Worlds*: June-July 06.

¹²²⁰ See, for instance, R.J. Crampton: *Bulgaria; 1878-1918*; New York, 1983, and S.P. Ladas: *The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey*; New York; 1932.

¹²²¹ D. Sari: *La Depossession des Fellahs 1830-1962*; (SNED, Algiers; 1978).

tells us about the genocides of tens of millions of people in other continents whether the Americas, Oceania, Africa and so on.¹²²²

Much more can be said about this new presentation of past and present reality, which is at the same time cleansed of Western evil and crammed with Muslim evil. As the latter is so much ranted about, its first effect is that it gives a very disproportionate, dominating view of Muslim beastly barbarism, threatening the whole of humanity. It also leaves us with the powerful perception of Muslim barbarism contrasting with Western humanity. If we look at reality, however, whether past or present, and as the final chapter will amply show, we see one undeniable fact: the corpses that litter the ground today, overwhelmingly, that is over 90%, are Muslim.¹²²³

It is this macabre trickery, which turns the corpse into the murderer, the victim into the criminal, which this chapter addresses. In the process, this chapter relies on historical experience to show that it is precisely and only by labelling the other with barbarism that his slaying en masse can be justified.

The issue this chapter considers, first, is the assertion that it is Islam which is the source of such barbarism.

M. Morsy: *North Africa*; op cit; pp. 287-8.

¹²²² Such as depicted in:

D.E. Stannard: *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*; (New York; Oxford University Press; 1992).

W. Churchill: *A Little Matter of Genocide*; op cit.

W. Howitt: *Colonisation and Christianity*; (Longman; London; 1838).

¹²²³ Any person can check this by either looking at the situation around us anywhere in the world, or consulting historical statistics of past decades or centuries. Consult bibliography in the final chapter of this work for some instances of mass slaughter of Muslims.

1. Islam as the Source of ‘Barbarism’

‘Islamic barbarism, violence and terror,’ as will be seen further on, constitute the most effective manner by which to justify military onslaughts against Islam, mass slaying of Muslims, and many other measures, from mass incarceration of Muslim activists, to shutting their schools and charities, to creating a climate of violence which permits the physical elimination of Muslim elites, some as victims of ‘terror’, and others as slain ‘terrorists.’

In the past, the West used threats by Muslim armies, whether Arab or Turk, to justify its wars on Muslims. Today, there are no Muslim armies that threaten the West, hence any evil deed, whether by Muslims themselves, or anyone acting in the name of Islam (regardless of who truly stands behind such a misdeed), is turned into a mighty threat to the West, which then justifies every action or measure taken against Islam and Muslims.

To be able to implement such policies, and widening a Muslim crime/misdeed onto the whole community, the West, via its opinion-making process, media, academia, commentators, political figures, etc, builds the ultimate link between the faith, Islam, and violence.

This connection, like every other matter relating to the Western approach to Islam, is centuries old. Eighteenth century Western rhetoric, for instance, contrasts Islamic barbarism with Christian love and humanity.¹²²⁴ In *Les Ruines*, Volnay says that:

‘Mohammad succeeded in building a political and theological empire at the expense of those of Moses’ and Jesus’ vicars.... God has established Mohammad as his minister on earth; he has handed over the world to him to subdue with the sabre those who refuse to believe in his law, preaching only murder and carnage....’¹²²⁵

Joseph White Bampton, who was appointed to the Laudian Chair of Arabic at Oxford in 1775, says that nations that have embraced Islam ‘are

¹²²⁴ Z. Sardar; M-W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; pp. 46-7.

¹²²⁵ Volnay: *Les Ruines*; in Z.Sardar; M-W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit.

universally distinguished by a spirit of hostility and hatred to the rest of mankind.¹²²⁶

According to Montesquieu: 'Mohammedan religion only speaks with the sword, and acts upon men with this destructive spirit which is at its origins.'¹²²⁷

The Muslims, according to Voltaire, have no notion of heroism, all murdering and thieving only.¹²²⁸

And for Rousseau in *Lettre a Christophe de Beaumont*, everything in Islam:

'Institutions, laws, even virtues, torment and degrade men by means of fasts, hardships, struggles and mutilation.'¹²²⁹

The literature of subsequent centuries is filled with similar depictions, and the sources of 'Muslim barbarism' are 'found' in Islam. The early 20th century missionary publication *The Moslem World*, in one of its countless articles on the subject explains to us how people become barbaric fanatics as soon as they become Muslims. Some extracts from one issue say:

'Heathenism has no fanatics. Religion of the heathen is a tribal concern... The Mahommedan is quite different. Islam tolerates no other religions. God demands their suppression.. The heathen becomes a fanatic in such (Islamic) school. Once the Mohammedan knows how to perform his ablutions and the sacred rites with the appointed formulae, he becomes possessed by the feeling, 'I alone am clean among the unclean!'... Fanaticism is naturally what the Mohammedan convert acquires, first, because it needs no scholarship... Although, unfortunately, he may not be able to wield weapons against the all powerful Whites, he can mock and despise them in his heart. And all this is rendering service to God. Whatever religious zeal the heathen did possess bursts into a flame of glowing fanaticism.'¹²³⁰

Likewise, Stoddard writes:

¹²²⁶ Joseph White Bampton Lectures, in C.Forster: *Mohametanism Unveiled*; (London; James Duncan and John Cochran; 1829); 2. pp. 469-70.

¹²²⁷ See P. Kra; chapter III: Religious Intolerance; pp. 85-112.

¹²²⁸ Voltaire in A. Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit ; at p. 146.

¹²²⁹ J.J. Rousseau: *La Correspondence complete de J.J. Rousseau*; (Geneva; Oxford; 1965-89); in A. Gunny; *Images of Islam*; op cit; p. 130.

¹²³⁰ The Influence of Islam; in *The Moslem World*; vol 2; pp. 392-3.

‘There is among Muslim masses a great deal of genuine fanaticism caused not by European political domination but by religious bigotry and blind hatred of Western civilisation.’¹²³¹

Cantwell Smith says:

‘It is the Muslim Arab’s aggressive reaction to the attack of his world which he has already found to be almost overwhelming, then has leapt with frantic, sadistic joy to burn and kill. The burning of Cairo, the assassination of Prime Ministers, the intimidation of Christians, the vehemence and hatred in their literature - all of this is to be understood in terms of a people who have lost their way, whose heritage has proven unequal to modernity, whose leaders have been dishonest, whose ideals have failed. In this aspect, the new Islamic upsurge is a force not to solve problems but to intoxicate those who can no longer abide the failure to solve them.’¹²³²

Recently, the American Time magazine told us:

‘This is the dark side of Islam, which shows its face in violence and terrorism, intended to overthrow modern, more secular regimes and harm the Western nations that support them.’¹²³³

Writing in 2003, supposedly to encourage understanding between the Islamic and Western worlds, Cox and Marks say:

‘Understandably, terrorism is currently top of the agenda. But there is substantial evidence of a concerted and coordinated strategic attack over a long period on the fundamental principles of Western societies.

Islam can provide Muslims with a religious justification for changing any existing society into an Islamic society. The aim is to make Islam supreme and to dominate every aspect of society. This is what is wanted not only by the leaders like those we have described - including Osama bin Laden - but by many Muslims all over the world according to their teaching, preaching and publications.’¹²³⁴

Judiciously, or insidiously one must say, and just like the whole of their work, in fact, being a combination of selection and juxtaposition of facts and declarations, combining selected verses of the Qur’an with

¹²³¹ L. Stoddard: *The New World of Islam*; op cit; p. 65.

¹²³² W. Cantwell Smith: *Islam in Modern History*; (Princeton University Press; 1957); pp 158-9.

¹²³³ *Time Magazine*: The Dark Side of Islam; 4 October 1993; p. 62. In A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; pp. 7-31.

¹²³⁴ C. Cox-J. Marks: *The West, Islam and Islamism*; op cit; p.56

declarations by Bin Laden and others, the same Cox and Marks tell us:¹²³⁵

‘Muslims believe that when they die they go to the grave to await the day of judgement when Allah will decide, on the basis of works done on earth who goes to Paradise and who to hell.¹²³⁶ The only way to guarantee going to Paradise - and avoid Allah’s verdict on the day of judgment - is to die in jihad while fighting the enemies of Islam.¹²³⁷ This provides a major religious motive for suicide bombers or others to volunteer for jihad.’¹²³⁸

Countless more instances could be given of this daily Western propaganda which identifies Islam with violence. The fact is: between Western rhetoric and reality there is a huge contrast, though.

First, the notion that Islam, as a faith, is source of violence is contradicted by the faith itself. The Qur’an sura 2:190 insists that believers are only to fight in self defence and not go beyond the limits of what is necessary, since God does not like the transgressors. All forms of torture are condemned.¹²³⁹ Forgiveness is emphasised as better than retaliation in Qur’an 5:45:

We ordained therein for them: "Life for life, eye for eye, nose or nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal." But if any one remits the retaliation by way of charity, it is an act of atonement for himself. And if any fail to judge by (the light of) what God hath revealed, they are wrong-doers.

Qur’an 3:133-134 says:

‘Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Garden whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth, prepared for the righteous, Those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity, or in adversity; who restrain anger, and are forgiving toward mankind;- for God loves those who do good.’

Quranic instructions were followed on the ground and in the reality of war, from the early history of Islam. Hence, after the entry of the Prophet (PBUH) in Makkah, Scott says:

¹²³⁵ Ibid; p.34

¹²³⁶ Qur’an: 101: 6-9.

¹²³⁷ Qur’an: 8:39; 4: 74; 9: 89.

¹²³⁸ Extract from declaration of war by Bin Laden; leaders of the World Islamic Front for the jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders... quoted in R. Gunaratna: *Inside al-Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*; (London; Hurst and Company; 2002); pp. 1; 7; etc.

¹²³⁹ As in Tabari, 1954, ii: 190; in A.Gunny: *Images of Islam*; op cit; p.36.

‘With a magnanimity unequalled in the annals of war, a general amnesty was proclaimed and but four persons, whose offences were considered unpardonable, suffered the penalty of death.’¹²⁴⁰

Davenport narrates how in the early stages of Islam, the Prophet sent a messenger to the governor of Bossa, near Damascus, who was taken prisoner and murdered by the Christian leader. Three thousand Muslim men were equipped for the retribution. The Prophet exhorted them to display their courage in the cause of the Most High. At the same time, however, he enjoined them to collect their booty not from the tears of the provincials, but from the public treasuries of the conquered state:

‘In avenging my injuries, said he, ‘molest not the harmless votaries of domestic seclusion; spare the weakness of the softer sex, the infant at the breast, and those who, in the course of nature, are hastening from this scene of mortality. Abstain from demolishing the dwellings of the unresisting inhabitants, and destroy not the means of subsistence; respect their fruit trees, do not injure the palm, so useful to Syria for its shade and so delightful for its verdure.’¹²⁴¹

And so it remained after the Prophet. ‘Be just’, ran Abu Bakr’s (the first Caliph after the Prophet (632-34) proclamation;

‘Be valiant; die rather than yield; be merciful; slay neither old men, nor women, nor children. Destroy no fruit trees, grain, or cattle. Keep your word even to your enemies.’¹²⁴²

Under Caliph Omar (Caliph 634-644), in September 635, Damascus was taken from the Byzantines. There was no killing or looting, whilst cities taken by storm in Europe were liable to be sacked, even as recently as the Napoleonic wars, notes Glubb.¹²⁴³

Even during the crusades, when Muslims were slaughtered en masse, they still found reserves of unequalled humanity. Finucane notes how in 1221, the defeated Christians were visited by their (Muslim) enemies, who brought them food to save them from starvation. Such stories of Christian Muslim cooperation, no matter how transient, humane, or justified the relationship, Finucane also notes, were usually received ‘with incomprehension in Europe.’¹²⁴⁴

¹²⁴⁰ S.P. Scott: *History*; op cit; p. 90.

¹²⁴¹ In J. Davenport: *An Apology*; op cit; pp 41-2.

¹²⁴² W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*, (Simon and Shuster, New York, 1950); Chapter X; p.188.

¹²⁴³ J. Glubb: *A Short History*; op cit; p.48.

¹²⁴⁴ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; (J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd; London, 1983); p. 201.

Equally, if historical reality is brought into focus, without one single exception, it shows Western Christian genocides - not Islamic - on an unrivalled scale, at all epochs in history.

During the crusades (1095-1291), millions of Muslims were murdered;¹²⁴⁵ wholesale rape, torture, mutilations, and even cannibalism took place on the part of the crusaders.¹²⁴⁶ There is not one single city that was taken from the Muslims without its population, in its entirety being slaughtered.¹²⁴⁷ In Sicily and other parts of Europe, the Muslims were wiped out.¹²⁴⁸ In Spain, it is three million Muslims, at least, who were exterminated.¹²⁴⁹ In Algeria, over ten million Algerians died as a result of French colonisation.¹²⁵⁰ And here, one is setting aside the genocide of tens of millions of Indians in the Americas, that of the Aborigines in Australia, the enslavement of over ten million Africans, and so on.¹²⁵¹ And today, in 2003-, in Iraq, by a count in October 2006, over 650,000 Iraqis have been slain.¹²⁵²

The Western Christian Church, which throughout history is depicted as a religion of love, in contrast to Islam, the religion of the sword, has, in reality, a dark history. Genocides perpetrated in its name will not be dwelt upon here, only brief instances are cited to make the argument. During the re-conquest of Portugal (1140s), on the coast, the Bishop of Oporto, preaching to a group of Englishmen, told them not to worry about killing mere Muslims: 'You will not be censured for murder or taxed with any crime' in taking Lisbon from the infidel.¹²⁵³ At the capture of Jerusalem in 1099 by the crusaders, Draper says, the brains of young

¹²⁴⁵ Josiah Cox Russel: late Ancient and Medieval Population, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 48/III, 1958; A.N Poliak: The Demographic Evolution of the Middle East: population trends since 1348, *Palestine and the Middle East*, vol X. no 5, 1938.

¹²⁴⁶ G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation des Arabes*; op cit; p. 247.

S. Runciman: *A History of the Crusades*, op cit.

J.J. Saunders: *Aspects of the Crusades*; op cit.

J.W. Draper: *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*; op cit; Vol I.

¹²⁴⁷ J.W. Draper: *A History*; op cit; Vol 2; pp. 21 fwd.

¹²⁴⁸ See N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit.

¹²⁴⁹ H. Lea: *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, op cit.

S.P. Scott: *History of the Moorish*; op cit; vol 3, in particular.

¹²⁵⁰ C. Ageron: *Modern Algeria*, tr by M. Brett, Hurst and Company, (London, 9th ed, 1990).

H Alleg; J. de Bonis, H.J. Douzon, J. Freire, P. Haudiquet: *La Guerre d'Algerie*; op cit.

¹²⁵¹ See D. Stannard: *Genocide*; op cit; R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit; etc.

¹²⁵² The Lancet: October 2006.

¹²⁵³ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; op cit; p. 31.

children were dashed out against the walls; infants were thrown over the battlements; every woman that could be seized was raped; men were roasted at fires; some were ripped open, to see if they had swallowed gold; the Jews were driven into their synagogue and burnt; a massacre of nearly 70,000 people took place; and the pope's legate was seen 'partaking in the triumph.'¹²⁵⁴

It is needless here to dwell on more instances of the religious wars between Christians, or the mass slaughter of Indians led by devout priests, the tens of thousands of Muslims burnt alive at the stake by the Inquisition, and so on.¹²⁵⁵

'It may be truly said,' observes M. Jurieu, 'that there is no comparison between the cruelty of the Saracens against the Christians and that of Popery against the true believers. In the wars against the Vaudois, or in the massacres alone on St Bartholomew's day (of Protestants by Catholics in France), there was more blood spilt on account of religion than was shed by the Saracens in all their persecutions of the Christians. It is expedient to cure men of this prejudice, namely, that Mohammedanism is a cruel sect, which was propagated by putting men to their choice of death or the abjuration of Christianity. This is in no wise true; and the conduct of the Saracens was evangelical meekness in comparison with that of popery, which exceeded the cruelty of the cannibals.'¹²⁵⁶

The following extracts from Arnold perfectly highlight Muslim humanity, which found its expression under the Ottoman Turks:

'The treatment of their Christian subjects by the Ottoman emperors - at least for two centuries after their conquest of Greece - exhibits a toleration such as was at that time quite unknown in the rest of Europe. The Calvinists of Hungary and Transylvania, and the Unitarians of the latter country, long preferred to submit to the Turks rather than fall into the hands of the fanatical house of Hapsburg;¹²⁵⁷ and the Protestants of Silesia looked with longing eyes towards Turkey, and would gladly have purchased religious freedom at the price of submission to the Muslim rule. It was to Turkey that the persecuted Spanish Jews fled for refuge in enormous numbers

¹²⁵⁴ J.W. Draper: *A History*; Vol II; op cit; pp 22-3.

¹²⁵⁵ Anyone interested in these can consult, for instance:

-J.W. Draper: *A History*; op cit; H.C. Lea: *History of the Inquisition*; W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; op cit. etc..

¹²⁵⁶ In J. Davenport: *An Apology*; op cit; p. 84.

¹²⁵⁷ De la Jonquierre: *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*; (Paris; 1881); p. 333.

at the end of the fifteenth century, and - the Cossacks who belonged to the sect of the Old Believers and were persecuted by the Russian State Church, found in the dominions of the Sultan the toleration which their Christian brethren denied them.¹²⁵⁸ Well might Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch in the seventeenth century, congratulate himself when he saw the fearful atrocities that the Catholic Poles inflicted on the Russians of the Orthodox Eastern Church:

“We all wept much over the thousands of martyrs who were killed by those impious wretches, the enemies of the faith, in these forty or fifty years. The number probably amounted to seventy or eighty thousand souls. O you infidels! O you monsters of impurity! O you hearts of stone! What had the nuns and women done? What the girls and boys and infant children, that you should murder them?.. . And why do I pronounce them (the Poles) accursed? Because they have shown themselves more debased and wicked than the corrupt worshippers of idols, by their cruel treatment of Christians, thinking to abolish the very name of Orthodox. God perpetuate the empire of the Turks for ever and ever! For they take their impost, and enter into no account of religion, be their subjects Christians or Nazarenes, Jews or Samaritans: whereas these accursed Poles were not content with taxes and tithes from the brethren of Christ, though willing to serve them...”¹²⁵⁹

Even in Italy there were men who turned longing eyes towards the Turks in the hope that as their subjects they might enjoy the freedom and the toleration they despaired of enjoying under a Christian government.¹²⁶⁰

¹²⁵⁸ Ibid; p. 334.

¹²⁵⁹ Macarius: *Travels of, from the Arabic of the Archdeacon Paul*; tr. by F.C. Belfour; (London; 1829-34); vol I; pp. 163; 165.

¹²⁶⁰ T. Arnold: *The Preaching of Islam*; op cit; pp. 157-9.

2. Muslim Barbarism in Western Rhetoric, and the Reality of Barbarism

In the Western depiction of Islam, its dangers and violence, it is difficult to know where reality ends and myths begin. (Esposito)¹²⁶¹

‘The Muslims are coming, the Muslims are coming!’¹²⁶² A caricature of Western fears? Exaggerated? Perhaps. However, when Dan Quayle, the vice president of the United States speaks of the danger of radical Islamic fundamentalism, grouping it with Nazism and communism, and magazines and newspaper editorials speak of Islam’s war with the West and its incompatibility with democracy, and a respected national newspaper, the Boston Globe,¹²⁶³ runs a four part series on Islam, whose general tenor is captured by the title of its introductory piece, ‘The Sword of Islam,’ it is difficult to know where reality ends and myth begins.’¹²⁶⁴

Indeed, the Christian West has throughout the ages developed a sustained rhetoric, which has turned Islam and Muslims into the most dangerous, threatening fiends, whose barbarism, violence, cruelty and fanaticism is such that anyone acknowledging loyalty to Islam could only be a perverse, deranged character.

This sustained propaganda has been looked at already, and its Islamic foundation refuted. What is necessary here is to look at the mechanisms and techniques the West has used to manufacture this image of the Muslim beast, when this has no foundation in reality, when the Muslim is, in 90% of cases, the victim of beastly violence, and when the Christian West, itself, which has for centuries labelled the Muslims and Islam as evil incarnate, symbols of barbarism and perversion, has the darkest history.

¹²⁶¹ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; p. 168.

¹²⁶² D. Pipes: The Muslims are coming! The Muslims are coming! in the *National Review*; November 19; 1990; pp. 28-31.

¹²⁶³ Boston Globe: July 27; 1991.

¹²⁶⁴ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; p. 168.

The first technique belongs to a long tradition of both Western Church and the Western state who blame imaginary violence and terror on the Muslims before unleashing mass violence on them. Hence, when Pope Urban called for the crusade (in 1095) at Clermont in France, he described the Muslims:

‘An accursed race, a race utterly alienated from God, a generation forsooth which has not directed its heart and has not entrusted its spirit to God, has invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by the sword, pillage and fire; it has led away a part of the captives into its own country, and a part it has destroyed by cruel tortures; it has either entirely destroyed the churches of God... When they wish to torture people by a base death, they perforate their navels, and dragging forth the extremity of the intestines, bind it to a stake; then with flogging they lead the victim around until the viscera having gushed forth the victim falls prostrate upon the ground. Others they bind to a post and pierce with arrows... What shall I say of the abominable rape of the women? To speak of it is worse than to be silent.’¹²⁶⁵

Of course, the pope lied. He had other reasons to call for the crusades as will be explained to greater lengths in the final chapter.¹²⁶⁶ He used an incident thirty years old, when a group of Bedouins robbed some Christian pilgrims in 1064-5,¹²⁶⁷ to turn it into an instance of generalised horrific Muslim crime to justify the planned extermination of Muslims, which the crusaders subsequently went on carrying out.

The same technique was used by the Catholic Church when it sought to eliminate the Muslims from Sicily (in the 13th-early 14th centuries) and Spain (1609-10), when their dangerous presence amidst Christians was emphasised above anything else, or by the Christian West in the wars against the Ottomans, when Turkish cruelties were blown up beyond any relation to reality, or during the Franco-British colonial era of the Muslim lands of the 19th century, when ‘Muslim piracy and barbarism’ were concocted and used to justify colonisation of Muslim lands, or today in concocting Iraqi weapons of mass destruction to justify the invasion of

¹²⁶⁵ In D. C. Munro, "Urban and the Crusaders", Translations and Reprints from the *Original Sources of European History*, Vol 1:2, (1895), pp. 5-8.

¹²⁶⁶ See W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; op cit. for some such reasons.

¹²⁶⁷ For the incident, the real causes of the crusades, Pope Urban's speech, see, for instance:

-D.C. Munro: *The Western*; op cit; N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit; S. Runciman: *A History of the Crusades*, vol 1, op cit; W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; op cit.

Iraq, or in always labelling the Muslims as murderous, fanatical terrorists to inflict any violent retribution on them that is deemed necessary.

Another means by which the Church and the Western state have altered the reality of violence and genocide, and in the process absolved themselves of both, has been to label violence and terror as such only when they are perpetrated against Westerners, but not when it is by them. Again, this practice is centuries old, as when St Bernard (who preached the second crusade (1147), whilst denouncing 'Muslim fanaticism and that an exposure of Islam would only increase the disgust which Christians felt for a religion characterized by sensualism and violence';¹²⁶⁸ also held: 'The Christian rejoices in the death of a pagan because Christ is glorified.'¹²⁶⁹ Similarly today, violence against Muslims is justified on noble grounds. Keneth Cragg, thus, states:

'The current (1960s) suspension of democratic forms (in Arab countries, and ensuing repression of Islamists) arises not only from the fact, evident everywhere in the world, that government in these days of high dams, flooding populations and industrialisation must be direct and efficient. It springs also from the fact that democratic processes to be secure, require standards of general education and traditions of citizenship which often do not obtain and for lack of which the democratic process play into the hands of exploiters and vested interests. Moreover, viable and valid democracy demands a vigorous party system and the concept of the dignity of the opposition - elements still wanting, for a variety of reasons in the structure of most Islamic communities.'¹²⁷⁰

In addition to the argument of Muslim barbarity/inferiority, historians invent further justifications for the mass killings of Muslims. Hence, on the mass killing of Muslims by the Christians in Spain, during the 'Re-conquista' (12th-13th centuries), one leading voice of modern Western scholarship, Lapeyre, tells us:

'During the re-conquista, the acquisition of land led to fierce fighting, and the Muslim population, in general, was expelled by force. This was a brutal solution, but it made things much more

¹²⁶⁸ J.W. Sweetman: *Islam and Christian Theology*; op cit; p . 76.

¹²⁶⁹ St Bernard: *Opera* (ed Mabillon); Vol I; col. 549.

¹²⁷⁰ K. Cragg: *The Dome of the Rock*: Jerusalem Studies in Islam, (S.P.C.K; London; 1964); p. 189.

simple.¹²⁷¹

The massacres of Muslims are even blamed on the Muslims themselves. Richard, along with the majority of modern Western historians, blames the massacre of the whole Muslim population of Jerusalem by the crusaders on the fact that the crusaders:

‘Had been infuriated by the insults hurled (by the Muslims) at the procession they had made beneath the ramparts.’¹²⁷²

The same technique is followed today, whereby ‘Islamic terror and barbarism,’ justifies internment thousands of Muslims without trial, invading their countries, turning their mass slaughter into ‘collateral damage’, concocting civil wars and death squads which wipe out hundreds of thousands of lives, etc.

To alter the reality of the crimes inflicted on Muslims (just as on others), Western media, academia, political or religious figures, have, past and present, dressed such crimes as civilising deeds, making them necessary and even noble, aimed at correcting and improving Muslim society. During the Algerian war of colonisation (began 1830), General Pelissier smoked to death tens of thousands of Algerians in caves, but writing to the Minister of war Soult, Bugeaud (Pelissier’s superior) held:

‘That rigorous methods had to be applied to submit the country, without which there would be no colonisation, administration, or civilisation.’¹²⁷³

Supporting this, Engels wrote in 1848 in the Northern Star, that:

‘The French victory over Emir Abd el Kader (in Algeria) was finally a good thing for the progress of civilisation, as the Bedouin are barbarous thieves preying on the sedentary populations, whose supposed noble liberty can only appear admirable from the distance’¹²⁷⁴

During the war of Algerian Independence (1954-62), whilst the French army killed over a million and devastated the country, still it was said that this was done for the good of Algeria and Algerians.¹²⁷⁵

¹²⁷¹ H. Lapeyre: *Geographie de l’Espagne Morisque*; (SEVPEN, 1959); p. 119.

¹²⁷² J. Richard: *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*; tr. by J. Shirley; (North Holland Publishing Company; Amsterdam; 1979); Vol A; p.15.

¹²⁷³ H Alleg et al: *La Guerre d’Algerie*: op cit; vol 1; p. 69.

¹²⁷⁴ Quoted by W. Bouzar: *Le Mouvement et la Pause*; (Algiers; 1983); vol 1; pp 216-7.

¹²⁷⁵ Alain-G. Slama: *La Guerre d’Algerie*, (La Decouverte, Paris, 1996).

-Benjamin Stora: *Histoire de la Guerre d’Algerie*, (La Decouverte, Paris, 1993).

-P. Evno- J. Planchais: *La Guerre d’Algerie*, (La Decouverte, Le Monde, 1989).

-H Alleg et al: *La Guerre d’Algerie*: op cit.

In India, the British Empire starved countless millions of Muslims and Hindus to death, still, Karl Marx saw that, whatever the crimes of England in India, 'it was ultimately for the best because it brought India into the narrative of Western history.'¹²⁷⁶

In the early 1990s, the genocide and mass rape of Muslims in Bosnia was deemed a civilising deed, even aimed at protecting the Christian West from the Muslim danger. One of the Serbo-Croat intellectuals, Dabic, insisted on the Muslim threat posed to Great Britain, Italy and France,¹²⁷⁷ whilst Todorov explained how the Muslims in Bosnia were motivated by their 'Islamic way of life,' alien to European civilisation, warranting its removal.¹²⁷⁸

Today, the mass slaying of Iraqis is presented as a war of liberation, or a war to bring democracy to Iraq, or, plainly 'to rebuild Iraq.' The destruction of the city of Felloujah in the same country in November 2004, and the killing of countless thousands of its population was, in American words, to give back the city to its people, to free it from terrorists, to remove evil, to prepare the city for democracy and, finally, it had to be destroyed because, in the words of the devout Christian chaplain of the American army: 'Satan lives in Felloujah.'¹²⁷⁹

Whilst the mass killing of Muslims is justified, or made acceptable, Islamic opposition to their slayers, however, is always presented and defined as fanatical terror, and described as organised hatred of the West. During the colonial period, Meredith Townsend, an experienced Indian administrator, says:

'All Muslims in particular are assumed to have fanaticism, as if it were some separate mental peculiarity, belonging to the Mahommedan faith, which accounted for everything, and especially for any marked impulse.' Thus Turks were called fanatics for sympathising with Arabi (the Egyptian officer who rose against the British in the early 1880s), and Arabi's soldiers were called fanatics when they were decently courageous; *The Times* said Arabi's success depended on

¹²⁷⁶ K. Marx 'the Future results of the British Rule in India; 1853. In R. Young White Mythologies; op cit; p.2.

¹²⁷⁷ Interview with Vojin Dabic: Polumesec muci zapad (The Crescent worries the West), *Evropske Novosti (New Europe)*, 14 April 1993, p. 18.

¹²⁷⁸ N. Cigar: Serbia's Orientalists; op cit; p. 151.

¹²⁷⁹ Christian military chaplain to the BBC on Newsnight 10.30, 24 November 04; and on BBC 24; on 24-5 November 04.

fanaticism, and France was warned by the newspaper correspondents to beware of an outburst of it.¹²⁸⁰

Even as they slew or starved Muslims in their millions in the 19th century, the colonial powers, as Rodinson outlines, still held that it was fanatical Pan-Islamism that was attempting domination, that bore an aggressive ideology, and was the fruit of international conspiracy.¹²⁸¹

Likewise, the French saw the Algerians who fought for independence (1954-1962) as nothing but murderous terrorists aiming at reversing France's civilising mission in Algeria.

And today, much the same prevails. Charles Krauthammer writes:

'History is being driven by another force as well: the political reawakening of the Islamic world.'¹²⁸² It is a challenge all the more ominous because it is Pan-Islamic. It is a "global intifada," embracing not only the Islamic heartland but also the peripheries of the Muslim world where Islam confronts the non-Muslim communities in Kashmir, Azerbaijan, Kosovo in Yugoslavia, Lebanon, and the West Bank.¹²⁸³

For his part, Raymond Aron warns of:

'The Islamic revolutionary wave, generated by the fanaticism of the Prophet and the violence of the people.'¹²⁸⁴

As Esposito perfectly remarks, it suits such opinion-makers to alter reality whenever it suits them, on one hand highlighting Muslim divisions when it suits their political agenda, and at others stressing Muslim unity in the hatred of the West when it serves that same agenda.¹²⁸⁵ Hence, Senator Albert Gore, speaking of Syrian-Iraqi relations noted

'Baathite Syrians are Alawites, a Shiite heresy, while the Iraqis are Sunnis. Reason enough in this part of the world for hatred and murder.'¹²⁸⁶

Yet, Esposito notes, when equally convenient, Islam, the Arabs, and the Muslim world are represented as a unified block poised against the West.¹²⁸⁷

¹²⁸⁰ Meredith Townsend: *Asia and Europe*; (Westminster; 1901); in N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; op cit; p. 468.

¹²⁸¹ M. Rodinson: *Europe*; op cit; p.127.

¹²⁸² C. Krauthammer: *The New Crescent*; op cit.

¹²⁸³ In J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; p. 182.

¹²⁸⁴ R. Aron: *l'Incendie*; *L'Express*; December 1; 1979.

¹²⁸⁵ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; p. 183.

¹²⁸⁶ Exit Lebanon; *The New Republic*; November 12; 1990.

¹²⁸⁷ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; p. 183.

Most often, to enhance the barbarism of Muslims, the easiest and most common of techniques becomes the suppression of truth and the concoction of lies. The role of academia in suppressing truth and fabricating lies has been studied in too great detail by this same author elsewhere to warrant more details here.¹²⁸⁸ Briefly, here, we look at how the media paints Muslims into monsters through lies and distortions. We hear of Western democracy and openness, but little would Western powers allow such freedom to others if it displeased them. Without dwelling on this point too long, for it can be observed by anyone around us, as an example, one refers to the particular antipathy to the TV station al-Jazeera. It has been a constant target in recent years, its transmitters bombed by the Americans on 9 October 01 during the war in Afghanistan, then during the war on Iraq (March-April 03), the station was threatened, before it was bombed again, on both occasions because it showed Muslim casualties of war. Then, in September 2003, its leading journalist was arrested for being 'an al-Qaeda man.' Then throughout 2004, constant pressure was put on the ruler of Qatar, where the station is based, to curtail its activities, and make it adopt a more pro-Western line. The station, obviously, was expelled from Iraq in 2004 so that the genocide in the city of Felloujah could remain unseen, and the truth about subsequent killings remain uncovered.

The BBC, most particularly, throughout the war in Iraq, in 2003, literally suppressed the worst pictures of death and destruction inflicted on the Iraqi civilian population. And the same corporation, throughout the same war, constantly conveyed the view that death and mayhem, and the war itself, were a means to end Saddam's terror. In the early stages of the war it even turned into an agency of propaganda for the military and politicians, talking of the fall of Um Qasr on the first day of the war, when it did not happen; telling of the surrender of the Iraqi southern army on the second day of the war, when it did not happen; telling of the surrender of Basra on the third day of the war, when it never took place; telling of an uprising in Basra against the Iraqi rule on the eighth day, when there was none; telling of a discovery of an Iraqi factory for the manufacturing of chemical weapons, when none was found; telling of the cold-blood execution of British soldiers by the Iraqis, when no evidence proved that it happened... and countless other distortions, which ended in the station going completely silent when the city of Felloujah was flattened in November 2004. And yet, despite all this connivance, we are told and retold about the corporation's dedication to the truth.

¹²⁸⁸ S.Al-Djazairi: *The Hidden Deb.*; op cit.

When genocides of Muslims are not hidden from knowledge, they are reduced to a mere incidental loss of lives. The elimination of Muslims in Spain has been consistently revised downwards, cut down from millions into mere thousands by Western ‘historians.’¹²⁸⁹ This continues today whereby the Western media cuts the numbers of Iraqis slain by the coalition from over a hundred thousand in 2004¹²⁹⁰ to just a few thousands in 2005-6.¹²⁹¹

Finally, we are daily bombarded with the news of ‘Muslim barbaric misdeeds,’ yet, hardly ever do we hear or read about the terrible woes inflicted on Muslims the world over. This short piece by Robert Fisk captures a little of this concealing of the terror daily inflicted on Muslims:

‘I remember clearly the first suspicions I had that murder most foul might be taking place in our name in Iraq. I was in the Baghdad mortuary counting corpses, when one of the city’s senior medical officials - an old friend - told me of his fears. ‘Every one brings bodies here,’ he said. ‘But when the Americans bring bodies in, we are instructed that under no circumstances are we ever to do post - mortems. We were given to understand that this had already been done, Sometimes we’d get a piece of paper like this one with a body’. And here the man handed me an American military document showing the hand-drawn outline of a man’s body and the words ‘trauma wounds.’

What kind of trauma? Indeed, what kind of trauma is now being experienced in Iraq? Who is doing the mass killing? Who is dumping so many bodies in garbage heaps?...

It’s no good saying ‘a few bad apples.’ All occupation armies are corrupted. But do they all commit war crimes? The Algerians are still uncovering the mass graves left by the French paras who liquidated whole villages. We know of the rapist killers of the Russian army in Chechnya... The Israelis sat and watched while their proxy Lebanese (Christian) militia butchered its way through 1,700 Palestinians.... Killing a roomful of civilians is only a step further along the road from all those promiscuous air strikes which we are told kill ‘terrorists’ but which all too often turn out to be a wedding party.

¹²⁸⁹ H. Lapeyre: *Geographie de l’Espagne Morisque*; op cit.

¹²⁹⁰ The Lancet: October 2004.

¹²⁹¹ Figures in Western media in late 2005 and early 2006.

In a way we reporters are also to blame. Unable to venture outside Baghdad - or indeed around Baghdad itself - Iraq has fallen under an all consuming shadow... For fear of the insurgent's knife, we can no longer investigate. And the Americans like it that way. Who knows what horrors have been committed far away in the sands....

For who can be held to account when we regard ourselves as the brightest, the most honourable of creatures, doing endless battles with the killers of 11 September or 7 July because we love our country and our people.'¹²⁹²

Robert Fisk could have added the uncounted hundreds of Muslims who have vanished from the West, handed over to murderous regimes; the uncounted tens of thousands disappeared from other parts of the world, including the Muslim world; the uncounted tens of thousands victims of state terror, of death squads, allegedly extremist organisations, but in truth state-run, literally wiping out all Muslim elites, and their supporters, just as happened in other countries in the recent past (1960s-1980s): in Central and Southern America, Viet-Nam, etc. He could have added the countless rapes, mass torture, endless incarcerations and much else, going on in silence, secrecy, and cover-up; cowardice, moral corruption, and hatred of Islam allowing so many terrible deeds to be inflicted on humans amidst silence and complicity, and all the while, it is the image of the barbaric Muslim which endures, pervades, and takes all space and attention.

¹²⁹² R. Fisk: Who knows how many atrocities have been committed; *The Independent*, 3 June; 2006; pp. 1-2.

3. Islamic Barbarism?

The myth that the Westerner has the moral high ground to correct Muslim barbarism has to be fought intellectually, not only because it justifies mass slaying of Muslims, but also because it is a plain lie, the West being guilty of the most serious and barbaric crimes in history, which its historians and opinion-makers by a series of devices erase and distort. This is the point under focus here.

First and foremost, it is worthless going into the details of Western genocides which spanned the continents, since one avoids the practice of seeking to darken a culture or civilisation by ranting about its misdeeds in the same manner as Western academia and media love so well to do with Islam and Muslims. Whilst aware of Western past misdeeds and crimes, one is also aware of the greatness of Western civilisation and the many ways it has benefited humanity. One is also fully aware that the majority of Western society is a decent society, and that crimes committed in the name of this society are the works of criminals, and not of this society. Hence is the need to avoid excessively dwelling on the dark pages of the West beyond what is necessary for the argument made here on how the reality of barbarism is reconstructed by a variety of techniques, from denying genocides, to cutting their numbers down, etc.

Ward Churchill writes:

‘During the four centuries spanning the time between 1492, when Christopher Columbus first set foot on the New World of a Caribbean beach, and 1892, when the US Census bureau concluded that there were fewer than a quarter million indigenous people surviving within the country’s claimed boundaries, a hemispheric population estimated to have been as great as 125 million was reduced by something over 90%. The people had died in their millions of being hacked apart with axes and swords, burned alive and trampled under horses, hunted as game and fed to dogs, shot, beaten, stabbed, scalped for bounty, hanged on meat-hooks, and intentionally starved and frozen to death during a multitude of forced marches and internments, and,

in an unknown number of instances, deliberately infected with epidemic diseases.¹²⁹³

In the White American perception, the Indian was inferior, and so had no right to impede 'the obvious designs of Providence,' Fontana says.¹²⁹⁴ He would survive while 'there remained corners of land on which he could find refuge from the advance of civilisation, but his destiny in the long run was extinction,'¹²⁹⁵ Fontana adds. Indian land and stock were seized; game was killed off; Indian hunters were attacked for hunting within state lines; Indians were bribed to sell their land, and land titles were obtained through fraud.¹²⁹⁶ American government agents were planted among the Indians to advocate removal, while Indian chiefs were bribed with gifts and grants to speak favourably of the policy.¹²⁹⁷ More often, Le Bon points out, whole Indian populations were eliminated, just hunted like beasts for fun.¹²⁹⁸ One of the early famed leaders of the new nation, Andrew Jackson, called native peoples "savage dogs" and boasted: "I have on all occasions preserved the scalps of my killed," Jackson at one time supervising the mutilation of 800 or so Creek Indian corpses, cutting off their noses to count and preserve a record of the dead, and slicing long strips from their bodies to tan and turn into bridle reins.¹²⁹⁹ It was President Jackson who was responsible for the famous Trail of Tears, when U.S. Army troops drove the remnants of the Cherokee nation out of their homes and across the country in a march, in which most perished; something 'alongside which the Bataan Death March, the most notorious Japanese atrocity in all of World War II, pales by comparison.'¹³⁰⁰

However, Ward Churchill notes how:

'Today, we discover, while perusing the texts of orthodox scholarship, that much of this never happened, or to the extent that some things must be at least partially admitted, was 'tragic,' 'unavoidable,' and unintended.' The decimated natives were peculiarly responsible for their own demise,

¹²⁹³ Ward Churchill: *A Little Matter*; op cit; p. 1; the estimated population range is 112-125 million in 1492; H. F. Dobyns: *Estimating Aboriginal American population*; *Current Anthropology*, No 7; 1966;

¹²⁹⁴ J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*; op cit; p. 118.

¹²⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁹⁶ E.R. Wolf: *Europe and the People Without History*; (University of California Press; Berkeley; 1982); p. 285.

¹²⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁹⁸ In G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation*; op cit; p. 468.

¹²⁹⁹ David E. Stannard: "Genocide; op cit.

¹³⁰⁰ Ibid.

having never bothered to develop immunities to the host of pathogens unleashed among them by the ever increasing numbers of Old World Settlers' swarming to their shores. In North America, where the practice of denial is most accomplished, successive waves of historians and anthropologists harnessed themselves to the common task of advancing the pretence that the aboriginal population of the continent was but a small fraction of its real number. Thus, the death of people who never existed need not be explained, nor can there be serious questions as to the original ownership of territory which was uninhabited until the settlers came. The formal term is land vacant and therefore open to whomsoever might wish to claim it.¹³⁰¹

In the relatively rare instances where even this complex of denial and evasion is insufficient - the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre and its 1890 counterpart at Wounded Knee, for example, are too well known to be simply 'disappeared'-orthodoxy frames its discourse in terms of madmen and anomaly.'¹³⁰²

Besides denial, another technique has consisted in cutting the numbers of victims of such genocides (of Indians, Black Africans, Muslims, Jews, etc). Here is one instance, how the Christian West, which today lectures Islam and Muslims on how to treat women, used to burn them as witches (women accounting for nearly all 'witches') in their countless numbers, millions certainly, and how, gradually this figure is cut down. The techniques used, and how such cutting down is contradicted by true historical facts, are also shown. Levack, the 'historian' chosen here, thus writes:

'Some estimates, ranging as high as nine million executions,¹³⁰³ have been grossly exaggerated. The totals have been inflated both by the claims of witch-hunters themselves, who often boasted about how many witches they had burned, and by subsequent writers, who for different reasons wished to

¹³⁰¹ See: J. Axtell: *Beyond 1492: Encounters in Colonial North America*; (Oxford University Press; 1992); pp. 261-3; F. Jennings: *The Invasion of America; Indians; Colonization and the Cant of Conquest*; (Chapel Hill; University of North Carolina Press; 1975); pp. 15-31.

¹³⁰² Ward Churchill: *A Little Matter*; op cit; pp. 2-3.

¹³⁰³ A. Dworkin: *Woman Hating*; (New York; 1974); p. 130.

emphasize the gravity of the process they were discussing.¹³⁰⁴ Detailed scholarly studies have generally led to a downward estimate of the total numbers of victims. It has long been believed, for example, that an early seventeenth-century witch-hunt in the Basque-speaking Pays de Labourd in France resulted in 600 executions, but it now appears that the actual figure was closer to 80.¹³⁰⁵ In Bamberg, where another 600 witches were allegedly burned between 1624 and 1631, the totals are probably closer to 300.¹³⁰⁶ And in Scotland, where Henry C. Lea claimed that 7,500 persons were executed for witchcraft, the actual tally is probably less than 1,500.¹³⁰⁷

In estimating the size of the hunt it is also imperative that we distinguish between the number of trials and the number of executions. There were some witch-hunts in Germany in which virtually all suspects were tried and executed, but these were exceptions to the rule.¹³⁰⁸ Table I establishes the execution-rate of witches in a number of European regions. The numbers of trials upon which these rates are calculated are very small, since they include only those cases whose outcomes are known. In most regions the execution-rate was less than 70 per cent and in some areas, such as Essex Count Ostrobothnia and Geneva, it was less than 25 per cent. Only in the Pays de Vaud did the execution rate reach the severe level of 90 per-cent. Even if we make allowances for trial records that have been lost or destroyed, the total number of persons who were actually tried for witchcraft throughout Europe probably did not greatly exceed 100,000.¹³⁰⁹

Then three pages down, the same author, Levack, writes:

‘The figures regarding total prosecutions and executions also fail to provide any indication of the effect that witch-hunts had

¹³⁰⁴ Ludovico de Paramo boasted that inquisition alone had executed 30,000 persons for witchcraft by the middle of the 16th century; in H. C. Lea: *Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft*; (New York; 1957); iii; p. 549.

¹³⁰⁵ G. Henningsen: *The Papers of Alfonso de Salazar Frias; Temenos*; 5; 1980; pp. 23-5; and 480-1.

¹³⁰⁶ C. Lerner: *Crimen exceptum; the crime of witchcraft in Europe?* In V. Gattrell et al. (ed): *Crime and the Law*; (London; 1980); p. 52.

¹³⁰⁷ H.C. Lea: *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*; op cit; pp. 246-7; C. Lerner: *Enemies of God; The Witch hunt in Scotland*; (Baltimore; London; 1981); p. 63.

¹³⁰⁸ H. C. Midelfort: *Witch Hunting in South-Western Germany; 1562-1684*; (Stanford; 1972); p. 147.

¹³⁰⁹ B. P. Levack: *The Witch Hunt*; (Longman; London; 1987); p. 19.

on individual towns and villages. Only when we break down the composite figures year by year and village by village can we appreciate the full intensity of the witch-hunt. When we learn, for example, that 274 persons were executed for witchcraft in the Prince Bishopric of Eichstatt in just one year, and that 133 witches were executed in the lands of the Covent of Quedlinburg in just one day in 1589, we gain a much better sense of the toll that witch-hunting could take than when we calculate figures for an entire country during a 300-year period.¹³¹⁰

For men living in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the main statistical question as far as witchcraft was concerned was not how many witches had been executed but how many were still loose. Some of these estimates were astonishingly high. In 1571 a French witch by the name of Troi-Eschelles told King Charles IX that there were 300,000 witches in his realm, and in 1602 the demonologist Henri Boguet used this figure to project a total of 1,800,000 for all of Europe. According to Boguet, there were witches by the thousands everywhere, 'multiplying upon the earth even as worms in a garden'.¹³¹¹ The number of participants at the witches' assemblies was estimated to be at least 500 by one demonologist and as high as 100,000 by another.¹³¹² These estimates help to explain why the educated classes in Europe were so frightened of witchcraft. They also help to explain why they prosecuted witches with such ferocity. A threat of this size could not be ignored; it had to be met head-on with all the judicial power that European states could muster.¹³¹³

From these two extracts by Levack, we not only note the technique he uses to cut the numbers of the victims of witch-hunting, we also note a major contradiction. By first (p. 19) trying to reduce the number of victims of the witch hunt, he cuts their numbers. Then by wanting to show how serious a problem it was (p. 22), he gives high figures of

¹³¹⁰ H. C. Midelfort: *Heartland of the witch-craze: Central and Northern Europe; History Today*; 31; 1981; p. 28.

¹³¹¹ J. Bodin: *De la Demonie des sorciers*; (Anvers; 1586); p. 365;
H. Boguet: *An Examen of Witches*; tr. E.A. Ashwin, ed. M. Summers; (London; 1929); pp. xxxii and xxiv.

¹³¹² N. Remy: *Demonolatry*; tr. E.A. Ashwin; ed. M. Summers; (London; 1930); p. 56.
H. C. Lea: *Materials*; op cit; 1957; III; p. 1297.

¹³¹³ B. P. Levack: *The Witch Hunt*; op cit; p. 22.

witches, failing to notice in the process that his second set of figures (p. 22) completely contradicts his first set (p.19).

Generally, as the following heading amply details, one manner by which genocides are ‘softened’ or explained away is by blaming the deaths of millions on factors such as diseases, internal strife, crop failures, etc.

Hari, the columnist at *The Independent* notes how Lawrence James says:

‘The British imperial rulers of India were humane men and, although hampered by inadequate administrative machinery and limited resources, made a determined effort to feed the hungry.’¹³¹⁴

In truth, the one imperial ruler Richard Temple who imported rice to feed the people of India was severely reprimanded for ‘his extravagance, and allowing the lazy Indians to think ‘it is the duty of the government to keep them alive.’¹³¹⁵ The people of India themselves were jailed for trying to organise relief efforts in the middle of famine.¹³¹⁶

Genocides are also disappeared from knowledge (and because of this forgetfulness, they tend to happen again) when those who denounce them are hounded as the criminals for reporting the crime. Hari, again, narrates his experience:

‘We are still a nation locked in denial. If you point out basic facts about the British empire - that the British deliberately adopted policies that caused as many as 29 million Indians (Muslims and Hindus) to starve to death in the late 19th century, say - you smack into a wall of incomprehension and rage.

The historian Niall Ferguson [who was very keen to highlight Turkish genocides in his programme on television *The War of the Worlds*] called me ‘Hari the horrible’ for writing about this in my column last week. Another neo-imperialist historian, Lawrence James, accused me in *The Sunday Times* of being a twerp...’¹³¹⁷

Hari adds:

‘When I criticised Ferguson for dedicating as much space in his revisionist history of Empire to the slaughter of 29 million people as he gives to a description of a statue of the Prince of Wales made out of butter, he responded primarily with personal

¹³¹⁴ J. Hari: The Truth? Our Empire killed millions; *The Independent*; 19 June 06; p.

29.
¹³¹⁵ Ibid.

¹³¹⁶ Ibid.

¹³¹⁷ Ibid.

abuse, comparing me to a children's writer. He claims that my sources, like Caroline Elkin's history of British atrocities in Kenya, are 'sensationalist,' and therefore not worthy of consideration.¹³¹⁸

Likewise, anyone denouncing the crimes of today, especially if committed on Muslims, suffers the same hounding. Craig Murray, the British ex-ambassador in Uzbekistan, lost career, marriage, home, and health, besides suffering terrible slander, because he stood for truth in denouncing the mass torture and mass killing of Muslims. Murray's story also highlights the crucial fact that whilst in their rhetoric, so-called civilised nations speak of human rights, respect for human life, democracy, etc, in truth, they condone and sponsor mass murdering dictatorships, the world over, and in the Muslim world in particular. Craig Murray's story also symbolises the countless numbers among Westerners, who, past and present, stood for what is right even when this meant to them terrible losses and woes as the following extracts show:

UK envoy to Uzbeks cleared of charges (*The Guardian* 24 January 2004 p. 5):

'Britain's embattled ambassador to Uzbekistan, Craig Murray has been cleared of all disciplinary allegations and is flying back to his post in Tashkent at the weekend. Sources there said he is contemplating legal action against the Foreign Office for trying to force him to resign.

Mr Murray was at the centre of an unprecedented row last autumn after falling foul of Washington's policy of supporting the former Soviet police state in Uzbekistan. The US, which has a base in the central Asian state, has been backing the regime of President Islam Karimov, despite its record of torture, imprisoning opponents and, on one occasion, allegedly boiling prisoners to death.

After Mr Murray clashed with the then US ambassador, it is alleged that pressure was exerted from Downing Street to restrain his outspoken comments. He was subsequently recalled, presented with a string of alleged disciplinary offences and invited to resign.

All the charges against him, which ranged from backing an overstayer's visa application to womanizing, drinking and driving an embassy Land Rover down some lakeside steps, have collapsed. He has, however, according to Whitehall

¹³¹⁸ Ibid.

sources, been reprimanded for “talking about the charges to embassy colleagues”.

A source told *The Guardian* that as a senior ambassador he had read many of Mr Murray’s dispatches from Uzbekistan.

“They were honest, well-written and accurate.”¹³¹⁹

That was not the end of Craig Murray’s problems. Ten months later he lost his job amidst further woes as shown in the following extracts:

Ambassador’s Sacking (*The Independent* 16 October 2004):

‘HE SAYS he is a “victim of conscience” for speaking out about how Britain has used information extracted under torture in the central Asian country where he was based.

The UK Government says he has been fired as ambassador to Uzbekistan because he lost the confidence of senior officials and colleagues. But it seems that Craig Murray is the first British ambassador publicly to lose his job because he broke the unspoken golden rule of diplomacy: don’t rock the boat.

Mr Murray, who is taking legal action against the Foreign Office to save his diplomatic career, caught the train from London to Edinburgh yesterday in disgrace and with his health ruined.

The campaign of smear and innuendo about Mr Murray, accused of heavy drinking and issuing British visas in return for sex, began when he dared to criticise the leader of Uzbekistan, a prominent ally of America in the war on terror. President Islam Karimov has been the scourge of human rights groups for having two of his opponents boiled to death. The 45-year old British ambassador; who has served in Ghana and Poland, also highlighted human rights abuses and torture in Uzbekistan, where thousands of Muslim dissidents have been jailed for allegedly engaging in terrorism.

Soon after his arrival in Tashkent in 2002, he told a human rights group: “No government has the right to use the war against terrorism as an excuse for the persecution of those with a deep personal commitment to the Islamic religion and who pursue their views by peaceful means.”

Mr Murray’s troubles began in December that year when he sent a telegram to the Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, complaining about the use of information from detained militants who had been tortured. Such a practice is legally and morally wrong, he argued, and tended to produce unreliable information which would then be passed on the Americans.

¹³¹⁹ The Guardian 24 January 2004 p. 5.

Mr Murray raised the issue again in February last year in another internal memo after the Government did not act on his warning. In March, he was called to a meeting in London to discuss the matter. At that point, the Foreign Office stated its view that although Britain did not torture people to obtain information, the intelligence gained through torture was worth the risk to protect British nationals.

At the end of March 2003, with the war on Iraq in full swing, Mr Murray received a visit in the Uzbek capital, Tashkent, from his line manager. "He told me I was unpatriotic. I was really taken aback by that as I consider myself to be quite patriotic."

After that visit, he said, "it then went strangely quiet". But rumours began circulating about partying at the embassy and alleged drunken behaviour....

In July last year, Mr Murray was recalled from vacation in Canada to be told that he faced 16 charges of misconduct. They included an allegation that the embassy Land-Rover had been driven down steps to a lakeside beach. The allegations were unproven-Mr Murray does not drive.

Two more charges were added during the course of the investigation into his conduct, which triggered a nervous breakdown...

Mr Murray did not need to be paranoid to think they were out to get him. He had transgressed Foreign Office culture by speaking out...

In May this year, he publicly scolded the Uzbek media for regurgitating state propaganda in a republic where opposition parties have been silenced. "It is time to fight for democracy," he said.

Last July, Mr Murray fired off another memo to the Foreign Office. He wrote: "Tortured dupes are forced to sign confessions showing what the Uzbek government wants the US and UK to believe-that they and we are fighting the same war against terror... This is morally, legally and practically wrong."¹³²⁰

Morality, of course, has no place among the 'civilised' when the victims are Muslims.

¹³²⁰ The Independent 16 October 2004; pp. 4-5.

4. The Immorality of Manufacturing Barbarism and Concealing Genocides

There are two fundamental issues of morality related to the issue of manufacture of barbarism:

The first issue of immorality is in demonising a group, or entity, which always leads to their mass slaying as has been seen, already, and also to be amply illustrated in the final chapter of this work.

The second issue deserving more space here is the amorality of disappearing genocides from history, whether of Muslims or non Muslims, Jews or pagans. The lesson from history is that any genocide that does not serve as a lesson is repeated.

One of the main techniques by which genocides of Muslims have been disappeared from history has been through their reduction to a mere, incidental loss of life. There is no need to dwell on the numbers of Muslims who have been exterminated at the hands of the Western Christians, the problem being instead with historians who love playing with statistics to bring the figures of the victims down. Generally one of them uses his 'scholarship' to cut the numbers of such victims by a certain ratio. He is then followed by another, who refers to the one before him, and using diverse techniques cuts down the numbers of his predecessor. Another follows, refers to his predecessor, and further cuts down the latter's figures, and so on and so forth. By the time we get to our day, there are hardly any victims of Western crimes.

Let us in this respect look at the historical case of the Muslims in Spain, for it highlights the case of a huge Muslim population eliminated from the midst of Western Christendom, and yet is today removed from knowledge. In his work, Lapeyre, who remains the source of reference for the countless many who cut down the numbers of Muslims exterminated in Spain, reduces their numbers to a mere few thousands.¹³²¹ In a passage, Lapeyre refers to Regla 'who had the great merit of destroying the legend of the 50,000 Moors of Catalonia, whom the historians piously transmitted without any critical effort. Even he (Regla) has overestimated these figures. By admitting 10,000 he still remains above the true figure.'¹³²² In the Kingdom of Valencia,

¹³²¹ H. Lapeyre: *Géographie de l'Espagne Morisque*; op cit.

¹³²² Regla; la expulsion, p 263; in H. Lapeyre: *Géographie*; p.98.

for instance, the number of Muslims at the beginning of the 16th century is put at just about 70,000.¹³²³ If Lapeyre is correct, where have the millions of Muslims who lived in Spain gone? If one takes the population of Muslim Cordova as an illustration, archaeologists excavating parts of the city suggest that the population was as much as a million on account of the very great area covered by the Muslim city, which Levi Provencal says was about 8 times the size of the modern city.¹³²⁴ A figure of a million inhabitants of the city would accord well with the figures given by the various authors, most of them very conservative and very reliable, cited by al-Maqqari: 200,000 houses for the common people and 60,300 for the more important elements; or even 300,000 houses.¹³²⁵ This completely contradicts the ridiculous figures given by Lapeyre, and leaves open the question: where did the millions of Muslims in Spain go?

Another problem that always resurfaces is when the victims of genocides are themselves blamed for their woes. Again, with regard to this genocide of Muslims in the midst of Europe, modern Western historians, in general, also blame Islam and Muslims themselves for their extermination. Lapeyre, again, admits that the Spanish Muslim population was en masse ethnically cleansed, but as he puts it, it was 'a brutal solution, perhaps, but it simplified things.'¹³²⁶ 'The power of resistance of strong minorities is not to be demonstrated, especially when this is a faith as tenacious as Islam', he adds.¹³²⁷

For Perez, another historian:

'The minorities living under the status of protected minorities first under Muslims, then under Christian, had a pejorative meaning; ... Once the reconquista completed, no reason was there to maintain such a situation. Spain had now become a nation like others in Christian Europe...The Moors, descendants of the Mudedjares, had refused to assimilate; they had to be expelled in the early 17th century.'¹³²⁸

¹³²³ H. Lapeyre: *Geographie de l'Espagne*; op cit; pp. 29-30 in L. Cardaillac; J.P. Dedieu: Introduction a l'Histoire des Morisques; in *Les Morisques et l'Inquisition*: Ed L. Cardaillac; (Publisud; Paris; 1990); pp 11-28; at p.15.

¹³²⁴ E. Levi Provencal: *Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane*; op cit; pp. 362-3.

¹³²⁵ Al-Maqqari: *Nafh Al-Tib*. Translated by P.De Gayangos: *The History of the Mohammedan Dynasties in Spain*; 2 vols; (The Oriental Translation Fund; London, 1840-3); pp. 214-5.

¹³²⁶ H. Lapeyre: *Geographie*; op cit; p. 119.

¹³²⁷ Ibid; p. 120.

¹³²⁸ J. Perez: Chretiens; Juifs et Musulmans en Espagne; Le mythe de la tolerance religieuse (VIII-XV e siecle); in *Histoire*, No 137; October 1990.

According to Cardaillac and Dedieu:

‘The Moors were building alliances with the enemies of Spain in North Africa and with the Turks, and other European enemies to invade the country. Denunciations of such Moors multiplied, and they were not without foundations.’¹³²⁹

And:

‘Why expulsion? Why now? Political considerations won, and the decision was justified by the rising threat and all the fears just described.’¹³³⁰

These Western justifications for the elimination of the Muslims fail to make the parallel with the Christians living under the Muslims in crusader times, or under the Turks, in later centuries. During the crusades, the local Christians, Maronites and Armenians, in particular, sided with the crusaders and the Mongols, and massacred Muslims in considerable numbers.¹³³¹ Yet once the Muslims (led by the Mamluks) took the upper hand, they could have wiped out every Maronite and Armenian on account of their alliance with the crusaders and the Mongols, and on account of their direct participation in the mass slaughter of Muslims. None of this happened though. Both Maronites and Armenians have survived to our day amidst Muslim communities.

Some modern Western historians justify the extermination of Muslims in Spain on the ground that Islam and Muslims constitute a disease. Hence, Conrad sides with Menendez Pidal, who in his *Historia de Espana*, concludes that:

‘After many centuries of forced neighbourhood with the Christians, this exotic race never integrated into Spain, neither to its faith nor to its collective ideals, nor to its character, the Moors never assimilated and lived like a cancerous growth in the Spanish flesh.’¹³³²

It is very common to hear of the Muslim disease/problem/enemy within the West today. If the Muslims and the countless decent Westerners fail to learn from the past, and we are driven back to the same vision of Muslims as inferior, a threatening body in the Western Christian flesh, as

¹³²⁹ L. Cardaillac; J.P. Dedieu: Introduction; op cit; p.24

¹³³⁰ Ibid; p.25.

¹³³¹ See, for instance, J.J. Saunders: *Aspects of the Crusades*, op cit.

S. Runciman: *A History of the Crusades*, op cit.

K.S. Salibi: The Maronites of Lebanon under Frankish and Mamluk rule; 1099-1516; *Arabica* IV; 1957.

¹³³² R. M. Pidal: *Historia de Espana dirigida por Ramon Menendez Pidal* Vol 2; (Madrid; 2nd ed; 1966); p. 41.

we had in the past, the mass elimination of Muslims from the West is a very high likelihood, indeed.

Finally on the Muslims, Western news and opinion making, by failing to address who truly stands behind the mass killings of Muslims today (whether this is due to incompetence or dishonesty), are guilty not only of turning the victims of mass slaughter into criminals, they are also protecting the real mass murderers. This not only confirms their generalized moral corruption and practices in relating events past and present, it also makes them accomplices of mass murder by their concealing the real authors of crimes.

The problems just seen in relation to the Muslims are not isolated but are the symptoms of a pattern, which always begins and ends the same way.

If we consider, first, the practice of demonising the other, as abundantly seen throughout this work, mass slaughter always occurs when the other is depicted as a barbaric inferior. Whether Muslims, Jews or Indians, or any other group, they were all slaughtered once intellectual legitimacy was given to their inferior, threatening, barbaric status. In America, as Howitt, notes, once the country was born, the American Republicans:

‘Followed faithfully, not their own declarations, but the maxims and the practices of their progenitors. The Indians have been declared savage and irreclaimable. They have been described as inveterately attached to hunting and a roving life, as a stumbling block in the path of civilisation, as perfectly incapable of settling down to the pursuits of agriculture, social arts, and domestic habits.’¹³³³

North American society in the nineteenth century, whilst celebrating the idealised Indian as the noble savage, still considered the same Indians as barbarians who impeded the westward advance of civilisation.¹³³⁴ George Bancroft holds that before the Europeans came to the United States the area was

‘An unproductive waste... its only inhabitants a few scattered tribes of feeble barbarians, destitute of commerce and political connection.’¹³³⁵

¹³³³ W. Howitt: *Colonisation and Christianity*; op cit; pp. 390-1.

¹³³⁴ J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*; Blackwell; 1995; p. 118.

¹³³⁵ Quoted in D.M. Traboulay: *Columbus and Las Casas*; op cit; p 56 .

Besides demonising, the other practice leading to repeated genocides is in explaining them away, i.e. attributing mass killings to other causes than human evil. Stannard, who like Ward Churchill, has done the best work in documenting past genocides in the Americas, denounces this process, which has evolved from the initial boasting about wiping out other races and people deemed inferior and barbaric, to today, when such past genocides are explained away. Stannard writes:

‘As Ward Churchill and others have overwhelmingly documented, the European conquest of the New World, including the US government’s destruction of its own indigenous peoples, was the most massive interrelated sequence of genocides in the history of the world. Over the course of four centuries—from Columbus’ first landing on Hispaniola in the fall of 1492 to the US army’s massacre of innocent Indian men, women, and children at Wounded Knee in the Winter of 1891—tens of millions of the Western hemisphere’s native people were consumed in a holocaust of mass violence that, in locale after locale, typically destroyed 90-95% and more of the indigenous population.’¹³³⁶

Historians and politicians once liked to boast of the slaughter of Indians that characterised the European and Euro-American conquest of North America. Thus, the most celebrated American historian of his time, Francis Parkman, described the Indian as ‘man, wolf, and devil all in one,’ and as deserving of the extermination that was proceeding apace as he wrote.¹³³⁷ And President Theodore Roosevelt happily called the US military grisly mass murder and ritual dismemberment of hundreds of Indian women and children in Sand Creek in Colorado ‘as righteous and beneficial a deed as ever took place on the frontier.’¹³³⁸

In the post-Nazi era, however, gloating over genocide has fallen out of vogue. In its place are discussions of the sad ‘inevitability’ of the native people’s destruction, of the ‘unintentionally’ unleashed European diseases that are said to have done all the damages, and of the kind efforts of the European invaders to find a ‘middle ground’ of accommodation and understanding between themselves and the

¹³³⁶ See D. E. Stannard: *American Holocaust*; op cit.

¹³³⁷ F. Parkman: *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War After the Conquest of Canada*; Charles Scribner’s Sons; 1915; New York; vol I; pp.ix, 48; in Ward Churchill: *A Little Matter of Genocide*; op cit; p. xvii.

¹³³⁸ Roosevelt is quoted in T. G. Dyer: *Theodore Roosevelt and the ideas of Race*; Baton Rouge; (Louisiana State University Press; 1980); p. 79.

Indians - generosity fated to fail, alas, because of the Indian leaders' alleged inability to 'control their warriors.'¹³³⁹

It has been quite an intellectual pirouette to behold, from proudly taking credit for mass murder to blaming the victim - from open celebration of genocide to genocide denial - in just a few generations.'¹³⁴⁰

Denial has also taken other forms. Contemporary accounts such as those of Las Casas', which described genocides of natives in America, are today deemed to be the result of their author's insanity.¹³⁴¹ The mass extinction of Indians in America, just as that of the aborigines in Australia, we are told, was only the result of individual, uncontrollable settlers, Western policy being always to protect such natives.¹³⁴² The Western man in America is today described as a victim, as Fontana notes.¹³⁴³ 'The redskin we see in our films is the villain who cruelly slays settlers and scalps them (though the scalping business was a white man's invention to facilitate payment by heads to the Indian hunters,)' Fontana adds.¹³⁴⁴

The worst aspect of immorality is in justifying the mass killing of others. Stannard picks on this problem:

'Nonetheless, says Charles Krauthammer in an essay in *Time*, while duly insisting that he would never "justify the cruelty of the conquest, the fact is that "mankind is the better for it (the genocide of Indians).'¹³⁴⁵

Ward Churchill notes how Charles Krauthammer, one of *Time Magazine's* regular political columnists, used an entire column on May 27, 1991, 'to lambast as 'politically correct' opportunists anyone who dared express regrets over the killing of millions of innocent people and the destruction of entire ancient cultures in the Americas. What happened in the wake of the European invasion was only what has always characterised human history, Krauthammer claimed, ... The real question is, he noted, 'what essentially grew out on this bloodied

¹³³⁹ An example of such victim blaming, among many, is: R. Wright: *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great lake Region; 1650-1815*; (Cambridge University Press; 1991).

¹³⁴⁰ D. Stannard: Introduction; in Ward Churchill: *A Little Matter*; pp. xvi-xvii.

¹³⁴¹ U. Bitterli: *Cultures in Conflict*; Polity Press; tr from German; (Cambridge; 1989); p. 83.

¹³⁴² Channel Four Programme: *Empire*; seen on Welsh version S4C, 11 February 2003.

¹³⁴³ J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*; op cit; p. 119.

¹³⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁴⁵ In David E. Stannard: "Genocide in The Americas"; op cit.

soil?' For, regardless of the level of destruction and mass murder that was visited upon the indigenous peoples of the Western hemisphere, it was, in retrospect, entirely justified because in the process it wiped out such alleged barbarism as the communally based Inca society (which really was only a 'beehive,' Krauthammer said) and gave the world 'a culture of liberty that endowed the individual human being with dignity and sovereignty.'¹³⁴⁶

Arthur Schlesinger Jr., writing in *The Atlantic* for September (1992), hastens to add that while

"In general, the European record in dealing with the indigenous peoples of the Americas was miserable - and indefensible....there are benefits, too, and these require to be factored into the historical equation."¹³⁴⁷

Schlesinger contends that these societies of dazzling accomplishment, '... would most likely have preserved their collectivist cultures and their conviction that the individual had no legitimacy outside the theocratic state, and the result would have been a repressive fundamentalism comparable perhaps to that of the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. And had the Westerners not conquered and destroyed the Aztecs and the Incas, these societies might have continued indefinitely with their unpleasant practices of "ritual torture and human sacrifice."¹³⁴⁸

Schlesinger was not content to build his case on the purported shortcomings of the ancient societies of the Americas. No, he gazed into his crystal ball and asserted.... that without the European conquests and slaughter at least some New World societies today would be sufficiently unpleasant places to live so as to make acceptable the centuries of genocide that were carried out against the native people of the entire Western hemisphere.¹³⁴⁹

Left radicals, likewise, scarcely deviate from such views. The postulations of the Revolutionary Communist party, USA, published nearly a decade before the quincentenary, held that the pre-Columbian population of North America was about half that admitted at the time by even the thoroughly reactionary Smithsonian Institution, that the people were so primitive that they were forced to regularly consume

¹³⁴⁶ In D. Stannard: *The Politics of Holocaust Scholarship: Uniqueness as Denial*; in A.S. Rosenbaum; ed: *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative genocide*; Boulder, CO: (Westview Press; 1995); p. 165.

¹³⁴⁷ In David E. Stannard: "Genocide in The Americas"; op cit.

¹³⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁴⁹ D. E. Stannard: *The Politics*; op cit; pp. 165-6. Schlesinger 's Atlantic piece ran in the September 1992 issue.

their own fecal matter in order to survive, and that only European conquest and colonisation had lifted them from their state of perpetual degradation to the level of rudimentary humanity.¹³⁵⁰

It must be said that it is not just American elites who explain away the killings of others, far from it. At least in America there is a section of academia and media, which is free to denounce them.

The fundamental problem remains that it is easy for those manufacturing the barbarism of the other, and justifying mass murder, to sit comfortably in their offices, and let their intellect express the hate in their heart and the evil of their souls. It is easy, indeed, to see other humans' lives as dispensable, thus failing to share in the horrors and terrors of their experiences under the gun, the knife or bombs of the slayer. To justify any genocide of the past, justifies the concept of genocide, and thus, perpetuates genocides. To justify mass killings, past and present, from positions of safety and power, is the most abhorrent, most cowardly, of all deeds. The authors of the rhetoric that depicts others as demons and inferior justify their mass slaying, and so are to be damned forever. And whilst anyone killing an innocent life remains a vile murderer, the worst murderer of all is the academic, the journalist, the intellectual, the politician, and other 'respectable' figures sitting comfortably, and ranting, daily, about the demonic nature of other entities, justifying mass slaughters, and lying about them.

¹³⁵⁰ The RCP: 'Searching for a Second Harvest; In Ward Churchill ed: *Marxism and Native Americans*; (Boston; South End Press; 1983).

Eight

THE AIMS BEHIND THE MYTH OF MUSLIM BARBARISM

The Muslims do not have writing and studies in which the Western Christians are painted in demonic images, as bloodthirsty murderous fanatics so as to justify attacking them, colonising them and killing them en masse. Even during the Middle Ages, when Islamic civilisation was at its zenith, and most Western nations were at a barbarian level, some even at their pre-historic level, Muslims did not use this as a justification to conquer them, slaughter them, and loot their wealth. There is not one single work written by a Muslim where the Westerners are represented as sub-human barbarians who warrant sending armies to civilise them by slaying them en masse. Western Christian writing and opinion making, on the other hand, as already seen, is crammed with such writing and image-painting of their foes: thousands of books, tens of thousands of articles in learned reviews and the media, every year; conferences, seminars, films, radio and television broadcasts; hundreds of university courses and thousands of academics and researchers, all dedicated to the task of darkening Islam and Muslims, using as already seen, distortions in all forms and all sorts for the purpose. This Western science of depicting the Muslim and Islam as barbaric, as already seen, was begun in the Middle Ages, and has proceeded over the centuries to our day, and, of course, through the centuries has been perfected, involving the learned and learning institutions (Departments of History, of Middle Eastern Studies-Oriental Studies...) which explains why it is so coherent and powerful in its form and effectiveness. Today, the Western depiction of Muslims as evil, barbaric fiends, of course, proceeds, daily, into an interminable rant, whereby any Muslim misdeed, whether political, domestic, or other, is so much ranted about that it seems to be the worst misdeed, and most vile act of all.

This propaganda, which proceeds alongside the suppression of anything positive about Islam and Muslims, is not devoid of aim, but

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serves instead a multiplicity of purposes. These aims have remained constant since the Middle Ages. One such objective has been to stem conversions to Islam by painting a dark picture of it. The main objective, though, has consisted of demonising Islam and Muslims so as to justify military onslaught against them, the onslaught itself aiming at the uprooting of Islam and the looting of its lands. The following looks at this and other objectives pursued in the anti-Islamic propaganda.

1. Manufacturing Barbarism and its Uses: Some Instances

Commenting on the records of Western Christendom in history, Howitt says:

‘The barbarities and desperate outrages of the so-called Christian race, throughout every region of the world, and upon every people that they have been able to subdue, are not to be paralleled by those of any other race, however fierce, however untaught, and however reckless of mercy and shame in any age of the earth.’¹³⁵¹

Howitt depicts such crimes at great length but misses, or fails to expand on what basis they were justified. What justified them was, indeed, the notion that the other who was being slain was barbaric/barbarian. The early Western colonial thrust (15th century ff.) was thus justified on the ground that it was to subdue ‘primitive beings’. The theologian Juan Gines de Sepulveda maintained that it was lawful to subdue the natives of America by armed force because they were:

‘All barbarous in their customs and most of them by nature have no letters of good sense, and they are infected with many barbarous vices.’¹³⁵²

The worst vice imputed to the native Indians was cannibalism. In his journal, Columbus wrote that the Indian Caribs eat human flesh,¹³⁵³ yet Columbus provides no evidence to support his statement.¹³⁵⁴ Still, the argument of Indian cannibalism was applied everywhere the Europeans decided to install themselves, using the same rhetoric about the native cannibalism and vices to justify their deeds.¹³⁵⁵ Such Indian ‘barbaric cannibalistic habits’ were amply used to justify their genocide.¹³⁵⁶ The myth of the cannibal Indians thrived in the Christian West throughout

¹³⁵¹ W. Howitt: *Colonisation*; op cit; p. 9.

¹³⁵² Textual quotations from Juan Gines de Sepulveda and Fray Bartoleme de Las Casas: *Apologia*; ed. By A. Losada, Madrid, Editoria Nacional; (1975); pp. 61; 142.

¹³⁵³ See the letter of Dr. Chanca of 1493; in *Select Documents illustrating the four voyages of Columbus*; ed and tr. by Cecil Jane; 2 Vols; (London; 1930-2); pp. 18-103; see also J. Sued Badilla: *Los Caribes: Realidad of Fabula*; Rio Piedras; P. R. (1978).

¹³⁵⁴ D. M. Traboulay: *Columbus and Las Casas*; (University Press of America, New York, 1994); p. 32.

¹³⁵⁵ See: P. Boucher: *Cannibal Encounters. Europeans and Island Caribs; 1492-1763*; Baltimore; (The John Hopkins University; 1992).

¹³⁵⁶ R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme*; op cit; p.256.

the extermination period, that is until the 18th century, though there never was any evidence of such cannibalism.¹³⁵⁷

It is likely that 70 million people from the Indies to the Amazon perished as a result of the European invasion.¹³⁵⁸ Their extermination in the name of the demands of progress went on without pause.¹³⁵⁹ Mexico's native population, Bitterli notes, was cut from an estimated 25 million in 1519 to 2.6 million in 1568.¹³⁶⁰ Traboulay for the same country also speaks of a fall from the estimated initial population of 25 million to only one million in 1600.¹³⁶¹ 95 out of every 100 people had perished, just as in the whole of Central America, as in western and central Honduras, where 95% of the native people were exterminated in half a century, and in western Nicaragua, where the rate of extermination was 99% in just sixty years.¹³⁶² Wachtel¹³⁶³ talks of about 8 million people in Peru at the conquest in 1530; this fell to 1.3 million in 1590.¹³⁶⁴ Traboulay, on the other hand, puts the initial population of Peru at 32 million in 1520, falling to 5 million by 1548.¹³⁶⁵

North of the continent it was the same story. Stannard observes that the number of people living in North America (today's Canada and USA) prior to the European invasion remains (of course) a subject of much academic debate, from a low of about 7 million to a high of 18 million; but by the close of the 19th century the indigenous population of the United States and Canada totalled just around 250,000, thus from the first arrival of Europeans in the 16th century to the winter of 1890, between 97 and 99 percent of North America's Indian native people were exterminated.¹³⁶⁶ Writing at about that time (1884) Le Bon was able to note that 'of savages there won't be many left soon.'¹³⁶⁷ The last Red Indians, he says,

¹³⁵⁷ D.M. Traboulay: *Columbus and Las Casas*; op cit; p. 32.

¹³⁵⁸ P. Chaunu: *European Expansion in the later Middle Ages*; tr by K. Bertram; (North Holland Publishing Company; Amsterdam; 1979); p. 310; D E. Stannard: "Genocide; op cit.

¹³⁵⁹ J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*; op cit; p. 120.

¹³⁶⁰ U. Bitterli: *Cultures in Conflict*; op cit; p. 34.

¹³⁶¹ D.M. Traboulay: *Columbus and Las Casas*; op cit; p. 56.

¹³⁶² D.E. Stannard: "Genocide in The Americas; op cit.

¹³⁶³ N. Wachtel: *The Vision of the Vanquished*; (Hassocks; 1977).

¹³⁶⁴ R. Robertson: Introduction, in U. Bitterli: *Cultures in Conflict*; op cit; p. 15.

¹³⁶⁵ D.M. Traboulay: *Columbus and Las Casas*; op cit p. 56.

¹³⁶⁶ David E. Stannard: *Genocide*; op cit.

¹³⁶⁷ In G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation*; op cit; p. 468.

‘Disappear thanks to an ingenious combination which consists in taking their hunting land, parking them in enclosed reserves, where they find little to eat, and then shoot them down once they come out driven by hunger.’¹³⁶⁸

By the end of the 19th century, Wolf notes, a hundred million or so Indians had been exterminated, representing in Western perception the victory of civilisation over savagery.¹³⁶⁹

The same story repeated itself in other places such as Australia and New Zealand.¹³⁷⁰

The details of how these natives were slain are not of interest in this work, although it must be said that the most inhumane acts were carried out for that end. What matters here is the point focused upon in this work, which Kabbani sums up very well, i.e. the consistency of the policy, which always uses claims of the others’ barbarism to subjugate them.¹³⁷¹ The following are extracts from Kabbani’s introduction and some of the sources she cites:

‘The encountered natives had somehow to be converted, controlled. The Calibans of the New World were tolerable only when subdued. In order to justify such servitude forced upon a people, this kind of narrative stressed the conspicuous cruelty, the lechery, or the perversity of the natives. It was thus that Columbus cultivated the theme of cannibalism as he urged Spain to enter into slave-trading, or Cortes depicted in graphic detail the sacrificial rites of the Mexicans to exonerate those measures he saw fit to take against them. Such a narrative reads differently, however, when compromised by the fact that between the years 1494 and 1504, three million South Americans died as a result of Spanish ‘pacification’.¹³⁷²

The forging of racial stereotypes and the confirmation of the notions of savagery were vital to the colonialist world view. In colonial America, for instance, there was a systematic attempt to portray the Indian as an abductor of women, a killer of children, and a collector of scalps, as an

¹³⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁶⁹ E.R. Wolf: *Europe and the People without History*; op cit; p. 285.

¹³⁷⁰ W. Howitt: *Colonisation*; op cit.

¹³⁷¹ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; pp. 1-8.

¹³⁷² W. Arens: *The Man Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy*; (New York; 1979); p. 49.

apology for white brutality against him.'¹³⁷³ Thus as late as 1896, Theodore Roosevelt could write:

'The settler and the pioneer have at bottom had justice on their side; this great continent could not have been kept as a game preserve for squalid savages.'¹³⁷⁴

Having realised his possession of territory, the white man could afford to wander from the fixed notion of the evil native. The twin vagaries of American guilt and European Romanticism blended to produce a 'Noble Savage'; the discrepancy remained, however, between such an imaginative portrayal of the Indian, and the extermination he was faced with in real life. The savage was noble if he belonged to a dying species: the last of the Mohicans is majestic precisely because he *is* the last of the Mohicans. And Fennimore Cooper's magnanimity, as befits this particular narrative tradition, is limited; the Indians, if occasionally noble, are barbaric and blood-thirsty at large. In one episode, they are almost cannibalistic:

'The flow of blood might be likened to the out-breaking of a torrent; and as the natives became heated and maddened by the sight, many among them kneeled to the earth, and drank freely, exultingly, hellishly, of the crimson tide.'¹³⁷⁵

(Kabbani continues):

'The projection of evil onto marginal or powerless groups within a society has always been a convenient method of producing scapegoats. Medieval Europe, for example, tried Jews for a medley of mythic crimes: poisoning wells, killing children for their blood, crucifying victims, and eating them too.'¹³⁷⁶ By the same token, women were associated with the devil, and seen as enemies of the Church and civilisation.'¹³⁷⁷

This went to justify the witch-hunts that tried women for sexual rapaciousness, cannibalism, consorting with evil spirits, and being generally intractable and capricious.'¹³⁷⁸

The projection of evil onto a faraway culture was also a significant aspect of medieval Europe's bulwark of bigotry. And since it had a portentous opponent in the Islamic state, it

¹³⁷³ L. K. Barnett: *The Ignoble Savage: American Literary Racism; 1790-1890*; (Connecticut; 1975); p. 5.

¹³⁷⁴ Theodore Roosevelt: *The Winning of the West*; (New York; 1896); p. 90.

¹³⁷⁵ J. Fennimore Cooper: *The Last of the Mohicans*; (London; 1826); 3 vols; vol 1; pp. 134-5.

¹³⁷⁶ W. Arens: *The Man Eating*; op cit; p. 95.

¹³⁷⁷ *Women and Colonisation: Anthropological Perspectives*; Mona Etienne and E. Leacock eds; (New York; 1980); p. 175.

¹³⁷⁸ See A. Mac Farlane: *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England*; (London; 1970).

fashioned a polemic to check whatever influence such a rival state might have. This polemic was highly charged with hostility, and notable for the fanaticism that engendered it. Islam was seen as the negation of Christianity; Muhammad as an imposter, an evil sensualist, an Antichrist in alliance with the Devil. The Islamic world was seen as Anti-Europe,¹³⁷⁹ and was held in suspicion as such.

Christian Europe had entered a confrontation with the Islamic Orient that was cultural, religious, political and military, one that would decide from then on the very nature of the discourse between West and East. Post-Crusader Europe would never wholly emerge from the antagonism its 'Holy Wars' had plunged it into. Its old desire to assert itself against its Islamic rival converted easily into a determination to dominate; this would become the psychological motivation of imperialists from Napoleon onwards. In precisely this spirit, the French general Gouraud entered Damascus in 1920: he proceeded immediately to the tomb of Salah Eddin al-Ayubi, who had defeated the Europeans in the Third Crusade, and announced gloatingly:

'Nous revoilà, Saladin!' (We are back Salah Eddin).¹³⁸⁰

Among the many themes that emerge from the European narration of the Other, two appear most strikingly. The first is the insistent claim that the East was a place of lascivious sensuality, and the second that it was a realm characterised by inherent violence. These themes had their significance in medieval thought, and would continue to be voiced with varying degrees of forcefulness up to the present time. But it was in the nineteenth century that they found their most deliberate expression, since that period saw a new confrontation between West and East - an imperial confrontation. If it could be suggested that Eastern peoples were slothful, preoccupied with sex, violent, and incapable of self-government, then the imperialist would feel himself justified in stepping in and ruling. Political domination and economic exploitation needed the cosmetic cant of *mission civilisatrice* to seem fully commendatory. For the ideology of empire was hardly ever a brute jingoism; rather, it made subtle

¹³⁷⁹ V. G. Kiernan: *The Lords of Human Kind: European Attitudes Towards the Outside World in the Imperial Age*; (London; 1969); p. 6.

¹³⁸⁰ On 22 July 1920 after the Battle of Maysalun.

use of reason and recruited science and history to serve its ends. The image of the European coloniser had to remain an honourable one: he did not come as exploiter, but as enlightener. He was not seeking mere profit, but was fulfilling his duty to his Maker and his sovereign, whilst aiding those less fortunate to rise toward his lofty level. This was the white man's burden, that reputable colonial *malaise* that sanctioned the subjugating of entire continents.'¹³⁸¹

Indeed, Western colonisation of Muslim lands has always been carried out for 'noble aims.' Marmier, in 1847, wrote on the French colonisation of Algeria. There was, he said, nothing to regret in having added to the annals of France:

'A magnificent providential mission, a mission of order and peace, in parts of the world that in the past enriched themselves through pillaging, and which took great pride in inflicting cruelties; a civilising mission amongst peoples with lively minds, but who needed only guidance; a religious mission on soil, which our faith has soaked with the blood of our martyrs.'¹³⁸²

The French noble aim, thus, justified their mass extermination of millions of Algerians.¹³⁸³ And as they did so, also to justify their deeds, they promoted the image of the inferior Arab, Heggoy noting how French colonisation did little to change the generally negative Western point of view about North Africans who were seen as inferior, barbaric people.¹³⁸⁴

The same can be seen today whereby any onslaught on the Muslim world is still being depicted as a mission for the good of Muslims themselves. The Western mission to bring light to the Muslims has always been justified on the ground of Muslim barbarism. It hardly matters if this Muslim barbarism and inferiority have always been fabricated through lies and distortions. Behind such rhetoric, the real aims have always been the same: to loot and destroy Islam. This is a millennium old tradition as the following shows.

¹³⁸¹ R. Kabbani: *Imperial Fictions*; op cit; pp. 1-8.

¹³⁸² In A. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*, op cit; p. 332.

¹³⁸³ M. Morsy: *North Africa*; op cit; p. 9.

¹³⁸⁴ A.A. Heggoy: *Through Foreign Eyes*; (University Press of America; 1982); Introduction; p. 3.

2. ‘Muslim Barbarism’ and Military Invasions: Some Historical Perspectives

Demonising before and during the mass slaughter of Muslims, and the objectives behind them, are looked at in the following through different stages of history, from the Middle Ages (through the crusades,) then to the colonial period, up to the present.

a. The Crusades (1095-1291):

The crusades are a very good example of how a distorted, negative image of the Muslim foe was built so as to help accomplish the objectives pursued by the Christian West.

Firstly it was necessary to build the image of the barbaric, mass murdering Muslims to stir the Christians into action. In launching the crusades (in 1095), Pope Urban II (Pope 1088-1099) spoke of:

‘An accursed race, a race utterly alienated from God... has invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by the sword, pillage and fire... They (the Turks) perforate navels... (and inflict terrible cruelties on the Christians, depicted in great detail by the Pope) What shall I say of the abominable rape of the women? Accordingly undertake this journey for the remission of your sins, with the assurance of the imperishable glory of the kingdom of heaven.’¹³⁸⁵

By this speech, Urban legitimised Christian aggression, making it for the whole Western community a case ‘of kill or be killed’¹³⁸⁶

To spread this message, Finucane notes, priests and prelates in different styles and tones, exercised ‘all the tricks of the orator's trade, cajoling, threatening, promising; using allegory, hyperbole, anaphora; rousing with

¹³⁸⁵ In D. C. Munro, "Urban and the Crusaders", Translations and Reprints from the *Original Sources of European History*, Vol 1:2, 1895, pp. 5-8

¹³⁸⁶ N. Daniel: *The Cultural*; op cit; p.158.

revenge motifs.'¹³⁸⁷ Thus, Balderic (Baldricus), archbishop of Dol, goes:

'We have heard, most beloved brethren, and you have heard what we cannot recount without deep sorrow how, with great hurt and dire sufferings our Christian brothers, members in Christ, are scourged, oppressed, and injured in Jerusalem, in Antioch, and the other cities of the East..... Base and bastard Turks hold sway over our brothers.'¹³⁸⁸

The Turks according to Fulcher of Chartres,

'Have killed and captured many, have destroyed the churches and devastated the Kingdom of God.'¹³⁸⁹

For Guibert of Nogent, unspeakable cruelty has been inflicted on the pilgrims; 'remember, I pray you, the thousands who have perished vile deaths.'¹³⁹⁰

'All atrocities,' Munro points out, 'highly spiced to suit the spirit of the time, and influence the Christians to take up arms, inciting many to take the Cross and flock to the Holy Land for revenge.'¹³⁹¹

And so the hordes departed to inflict revenge: 'Clergy, nobles, all the people, the chaste, the incestuous, the adulterers, robbers, all who professed the Christian faith,' grasped the opportunity for penance, and went on the crusade.¹³⁹² They 'emerged in bands on all sides,' equipped themselves with food and arms that they needed to get to Jerusalem,' says Albert of Aix, and were 'burning with fire and divine love.'¹³⁹³

Once reaching the Muslim East, they committed terrible atrocities such as when they took Ma'arrat an-Nu'man in 1098. The terrified population hid in their homes, but to no avail. For three days the slaughter never stopped; the crusaders killed more than 100,000 people.¹³⁹⁴ The chronicler of nearby Aleppo, Ibn al-Adim (d. 1262), speaks of the carnage:

'They (the Franks) killed a great number under torture. They extorted people's treasures. They prevented people from (getting)

¹³⁸⁷ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; (J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd; London, 1983); p.30.

¹³⁸⁸ In A. C. Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants*, (Princeton University Press; 1921); pp 33-36.

¹³⁸⁹ D.C. Munro: *The Western attitude*; op cit; at p.329.

¹³⁹⁰ In N. Daniel: *The Arabs*, op cit; p.253.

¹³⁹¹ D.C. Munro: *The Western*; op cit; p. 329.

¹³⁹² N. Daniel: *The Arabs*; op cit; p.122.

¹³⁹³ Ibid; p.123.

¹³⁹⁴ Ibn al-Athir: *Kitab al-Kamil*; ed K.J. Tornberg; 12 vols; (Leiden; 1851-72). X; p. 190.

water, and sold it to them. Most of the people died of thirst... No treasure remained there that was not extorted by them. They destroyed the walls of the town, burned its mosques and houses and broke the minbars.¹³⁹⁵

Christian sources, present at the scene, were more descriptive. Robert the Monk says:

‘Our men walked through the roads, places, on the roofs, and feasted on the slaughter just like a lioness who had her cubs taken from her. They cut into pieces, and put to death children, the young, and the old crumbling under the weight of the years. They did that in groups... Our men grabbed everybody who fell in their hands. They cut bellies open, and took out gold coins. Oh detestable cupidity of gold! Streams of blood ran on the roads of the city; and everywhere lay corpses. Oh blinded nations and destined to death; none of that multitude accepted the Christian faith. At last Bohemond brought out all those he had first invited to lock themselves in the tower of the place. He ordered that all old women be put to death, and also old men, whose age had rendered useless; then all the rest he ordered to be taken to Antioch to be sold as slaves. This massacre of the Turks took place on 12 December; on Sunday; but on this day not all work could be accomplished; so the following day our men killed all the rest.’¹³⁹⁶

Radulph of Caen said how:

"In Maarra our troops boiled pagan adults in cooking pots; they impaled children on spits and devoured them grilled."¹³⁹⁷

In fact, as the chronicler, William of Tyre notes, it was a common practice for the crusaders to roast and eat the flesh of the Muslims they slew.¹³⁹⁸ The daughter of the Byzantine Emperor, Anna Comnena, accused Peter the Hermit's followers of chopping up babies and impaling others on spits to roast over fires, while the elderly were subjected to a variety of tortures.¹³⁹⁹ At Ma'arra, to avoid such a fate,

¹³⁹⁵ In Y. Tabba: Monuments with a message, in *The Meeting of Two Worlds*; Ed V.P. Goss; (Kalamazoo; Michigan; 1986); pp. 223-40; at p. 233.

See Kemal Eddin: *Muntakhabat min Tarikh Halab*; in *Receuil des Historiens Orientaux*; (Paris; 1872); ff. vol iii; pp. 586-7.

¹³⁹⁶ Robert the Monk, in G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation*, op cit; p. 248.

¹³⁹⁷ In Janet Abu Lughod: *Before European Hegemony*; (Oxford University Press; 1989); p. 107.

¹³⁹⁸ C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom*; op cit. p. 45.

¹³⁹⁹ *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*, tr. E.R. A. Sewter; (Harmondsworth; 1969); pp. 311; 437.

many Muslims were said by a Christian writer to have jumped down wells to their deaths.¹⁴⁰⁰

These massacres were generalised to all towns and cities taken by the crusaders, from Antioch, to Jerusalem to Caesarea..., and lasted for more than a century. Then, in the 1250s, in alliance with the Mongols, the Christians threatened to exterminate the whole Muslim entity.¹⁴⁰¹ Had it not been for the Seljuk and Mamluk fight-back, principally, the Muslims would have been extinguished.¹⁴⁰² It is likely that over ten million Muslims were slaughtered by both crusaders and Mongols.¹⁴⁰³

Other than the annihilation of Muslims, there were other aims.

Firstly, the Catholic Church wanted to unite both Western and Eastern Churches. Pope Urban's Speech at the Council of Clermont in 1095, which summoned the crusaders against the Muslims, followed the crushing of the Byzantine armies in 1071 by the Seljuk Turks at Manzikert, and the promises made by the Byzantine emperor to the Catholic Church for reunification. Pope Urban knew that by coming to the rescue of the Byzantine emperor, he could unify both Churches under him.¹⁴⁰⁴

A second reason for the crusades, as Durant explains, was the ambition of the Italian cities-Pisa, Genoa, Venice, Amalfi to extend their rising commercial power.¹⁴⁰⁵ This followed the Norman capture of Sicily from the Muslims (1090), and Christians progress in Spain (the capture of Toledo in 1085), which freed the western Mediterranean for Christian trade; and the Italian cities sought to end Muslim ascendancy in the eastern Mediterranean, and open the markets of the Near East to Western European goods. We do not know, Durant says, how close these Italian merchants were to the ear of the Pope.¹⁴⁰⁶

¹⁴⁰⁰ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; op cit; p.106;

¹⁴⁰¹ Baron G. D'Ohsson: *Histoire des Mongols*, in four volumes; (Les Freres Van Cleef; la Haye and Amsterdam; 1834).

J.J. Saunders: *Aspects of the Crusades*, op cit.

¹⁴⁰² Ibn al-Qalanisi: *Dayl tarikh Dimashk*; ed. H.F. Amedroz; (Leiden; 1908).

Herbert. M. J. Loewe: The Seljuqs: in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, op cit; pp 299-317.

Ibn al-Furat: *Tarikh al-Duwal wal Muluk*; ed. M. F. El-Shayyal; unpublished Ph.d.; University of Edinburgh; 1986.

¹⁴⁰³ A.N Poliak: The Demographic Evolution of the Middle East: population trends since 1348, Palestine and the Middle East, vol X. no 5, 1938.

E. G. Browne: *Literary History of Persia*; (Cambridge University Press; 1929).

Baron G. D'Ohsson: *Histoire des Mongols*, op cit;

¹⁴⁰⁴ D. Hay: *The Medieval Centuries*; (Methuen and Co; London; 1964); p. 90.

¹⁴⁰⁵ W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; op cit; p. 586.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

A third reason was that the Christian West was at war with itself, and for a century before the crusades attempts were made to limit the effects of domestic warfare.¹⁴⁰⁷ Fighting a common enemy, Islam, it was concluded, was a unifying element. Urban, besides, was not blind either to the advantage accruing to Western society if the warlike energies of the lesser baronage were deflected East.¹⁴⁰⁸

Fourthly, as one contemporary put into the mouth of Urban at Clermont in 1095, the explicit statement that there was not enough land in the West:

‘This land you inhabit... is overfilled by numbers; it does not abound in wealth: it supplies scarcely enough food for those who farm it; hence it is that you fight and devour each other, that you wage wars and often perish by mutual blows.’¹⁴⁰⁹

This was a shared belief amongst all echelons of the departing crusaders. The main crusader leader, Godfrey of Bouillon, was accompanied by a brother, Baldwin, and the other leader, Bohemond, by a nephew, Tancred, who hoped to make their fortunes overseas.¹⁴¹⁰ Bohemond of Tarento went for no reason other than the desire to found a principality in the East, and Raymond of St.Gilles, that other leader, also had an eye for the fair lands of Syria.¹⁴¹¹

‘Everyone sought a piece of the gains of this earth. The poor were so anxious for a chance to strike it rich that, once the killing began, ‘they were scrabbling for the spoils while the knights were still killing the Turks.’¹⁴¹²

However, the main aim, by far, behind the crusades, was that this was the best time to destroy the Muslim foe once and for all. The Muslim world was in a chaotic state prior to Urban’s call for the crusades. Sicily had just been lost by the Muslims to the Normans (1089-90). The Spanish re-conquista was now moving ahead (taking of Toledo in 1085). Even more interestingly from a Christian point of view, the Muslim East was in chaos. There were wars between the Sunnis and Shias, i.e. Seljuks and Fatimids, which had split the Muslim world right down the middle. The Muslim leadership has also been murdered. In 1092 the greatest figure of Seljuk history, Nizam al-Mulk, the facto ruler of the Seljuk

¹⁴⁰⁷ D. Hay: *The Medieval Centuries*; op cit; p. 90.

¹⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰⁹ Ibid; p. 81.

¹⁴¹⁰ Ibid; p. 91.

¹⁴¹¹ J.H. Lamonte: *Crusade and Jihad*; in *The Arab Heritage*, N.A. Faris ed: (Princeton University Press, 1944); pp 159-98. p.162.

¹⁴¹² R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; op cit; p.79.

Empire for over thirty years, was murdered.¹⁴¹³ A month later, Malik Shah, the third Seljuk sultan, died in suspicious circumstances, after a successful twenty-year reign, his death followed closely by that of his wife, grandson and other powerful political figures.¹⁴¹⁴ Leaderless, the Islamic world was ridden with internal strife; 11th century Syria, Lamonte notes, was 'a crazy quilt of semi independent states.'¹⁴¹⁵ The Islamic world was thus in no position to fend off the attacks from Western Europe which were about to occur.¹⁴¹⁶ The timing of the First Crusade, Hillenbrand notes, simply could not have been more propitious:

'Had the Europeans somehow been briefed that this was the perfect moment to pounce? Unfortunately there is little evidence on this in the Islamic sources, but seldom had the arm of coincidence been longer.'¹⁴¹⁷

It was, indeed, the best of times to secure the main objective of Western Christendom, 'An overriding motive to destroy the Muslim creed, to annihilate Islam.'¹⁴¹⁸ To do this, however, the essential ingredient was required: Muslim aggression, and thus Pope Urban's speech.

b. Western Colonisation (18th-19th centuries):

In this period, equally, before Western Christendom invaded the Muslim land, it first built the dark image of the foe (Islam and Muslims,) multiplying images of cruelty, barbarism, tyranny and corruption.¹⁴¹⁹ Western military invasions were presented as seeking to eliminate such Islamic barbarism, and to bring civilisation and enlightenment to the Muslims. Yet, once the Muslim lands were occupied, the real objectives became clear. These points are looked at through the instances of Egypt and Algeria.

¹⁴¹³ W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*, op cit; Chapter XIV; p.309.

¹⁴¹⁴ C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades*; op cit; p.33.

¹⁴¹⁵ J.H. Lamonte: *Crusade and Jihad*: op cit; p.163.

¹⁴¹⁶ C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades*, op cit; p.18.

¹⁴¹⁷ Ibid; p.33.

¹⁴¹⁸ C. Bennett: *Victorian Images of Islam*; (Grey Seal; London; 1992); p. 6.

¹⁴¹⁹ N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe*; op cit; p.23

Egypt:

First, once more, the image of the barbaric Muslim has to be built, and thus, the negative depictions by successive travellers to the Muslim world. In his travels through Egypt and Syria, in the last decades of the 18th century, the Frenchman, Volnay, dwells on the ‘despotism’ of the Mamluks and Turks.¹⁴²⁰ He speaks of the Turks mistreating the Christians in a ‘thousand manners.’¹⁴²¹ Volnay devotes almost the whole of his book to Mamluk corruption, misdeeds, cruelty, anarchic rule, incompetence, despotic rule etc. He also informs the reader in great confidence that ‘In Egypt riotous and rebellious spirits, which indicate a simmering fire under cover (are) waiting to explode if kindled by hands that can stir it.’¹⁴²²

Likewise, the French tradesmen established in Egypt, despite having been granted considerable privileges by the Mamluks to trade in Egypt, in the early 1790s, sent written requests for French military intervention ‘to protect them from Mamluk despotism and tyranny.’ One request was sent to the Chamber of Marseilles, the other to the constituted assembly. In the first they speak of French men ‘shaking under the yoke of despotism, forced to trade under ruinous conditions, and leading a precarious existence.’¹⁴²³

In 1794, another request went:

‘The prolongation of this scandalous situation is outrageous for a republic which writes the laws for Europe and whose name is terror for tyrants....’¹⁴²⁴

‘We need urgent rescue, because our predicaments are at their worst.... French people suffer under tyranny and call on their country to come to their rescue.’¹⁴²⁵

This alleged Turkish-Mamluk despotism was used by the French as a justification for military invasion. The French army, led by Napoleon (Bonaparte), invaded Egypt in July 1798 so as to remove the Mamluk ‘tyrants.’ On entering Egypt, the French presented their aims to the Egyptians as follows:

¹⁴²⁰ C. Chasseboeuf (Volnay): *Voyage; op cit*; at p 373.

¹⁴²¹ Ibid.

¹⁴²² Ibid.

¹⁴²³ G. Hanotaux: *Histoire de la Nation Egyptienne*; (Vol 5 by H. Deherain.) (Paris; Librarie Plon; 1931); p. 208.

¹⁴²⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴²⁵ Ibid; p.209.

‘For very long, the Beys who rule Egypt have insulted the French nation, and have heaped insults on its tradesmen. Now has arrived the hour of punishment. For very long, this collection of slaves (the Mamluks), purchased from Georgia and the Caucasus has inflicted its tyranny upon the most beautiful part of the world, but God, on Whom all depends, has ordered that their reign ends.... People of Egypt, I (Napoleon speaking) have come to restore your rights, punish the usurpers; and more than the Mamluks I only have respect for God, his Prophet and the Qur’an.’¹⁴²⁶

Napoleon adds:

‘All Egyptians will be called upon to manage their country; the wisest, the best instructed, the most virtuous will govern, and the people will be happy.’

‘Three times happier will be those who will side with us: they will prosper in their fortune and ranks. Happy will be those who will remain neutral: they will have time to learn to know us and will join with us.’¹⁴²⁷

In truth, the real reasons for the French occupation of Egypt had nothing to do with the French claims, but had long been established already. France perceived of the strategic significance and commercial potential of Egypt, and for a very long time many schemes had been considered for the conquest and occupation of the country by French statesmen.¹⁴²⁸ In 1686, Father Jean Coppin published a book *‘Le Bouclier de l’Europe ou la Guerre Sainte’* (The Shield of Europe, or Holy War) in which the dismantlement of the Turkish realm was envisaged, and in which Egypt was attributed to France.¹⁴²⁹ The same views were developed early in the 18th century, in a manuscript of the Bibliotheque Nationale titled: ‘Project for the Conquest of Egypt Under the Rule of Louis XV’, the anonymous author showing his perfect knowledge of the country, and suggesting its occupation, for it would make France ‘the arbiter of three major parts of the world, because the strategic position of this country is the key for such parts,

¹⁴²⁶ Ibid; p. 254.

¹⁴²⁷ For more on this proclamation, and the first seven months of French presence in Egypt, see Al-Jabarti: *Al-Jabarti’s chronicle of the first seven months of the French occupation of Egypt*. Ed and tr by S. Moreh; (Leiden, 1975).

¹⁴²⁸ P.M. Holt: *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent: 1522-1922*. Cornell Paperbacks; (Ithaca; New York; 1966); p.155.

¹⁴²⁹ G. Hanotaux/H. Deherain: *Histoire*; op cit; p. 202.

indeed.¹⁴³⁰ On top of its strategic position, the French hoped to occupy Egypt permanently and to profit from its agriculture and trade under the guise of 'liberating' the Egyptians from Mamluk rule.¹⁴³¹ Complaints, or calls for intervention, by French merchants were only to serve as pretext for Bonaparte's expedition.¹⁴³² Detailed plans for the conquest were also ready long before. Two decades before the invasion, in 1777, Baron Tott arrived in Egypt sent on a mission by the French government to study the situation in military and political terms in the southern Turkish shores.¹⁴³³ When he returned to France, Tott gave a secret memoire to the minister of defence where he described the state of Egypt and the means to conquer it.¹⁴³⁴

The real French aims became clear once they asserted their military presence. In the short time they stayed in Egypt, roughly two years, besides hanging Egyptian religious figures, the French slew Egyptians en masse, in places burning whole populations in their homes.¹⁴³⁵ They also looted the Egyptian countryside, and taxed the Egyptians into ruin.¹⁴³⁶ The true French aim was also to advance on the Holy Land from Egypt. They launched a bloody campaign, where, in places such as Jaffa, French troops slaughtered both garrison and population of the city.¹⁴³⁷ One such massacre is described by a French officer Malus:

'The soldiers, everywhere were slitting throats of men, women, children, old people, Christians, Turks, all that had a human figure. Doors were broken, houses crushed; women were wailing; father thrown upon the corpse of the son; the daughter raped on the corpse of her mother; smoke from bodies burnt alive; the smell of blood; the cries of the wounded; the shouts of the soldiers fighting over the loot of a dying prey; furious shouts from soldiers responding to the cries of despair by shouts of anger and re-doubled blows; at last men, gorged with blood (from their victims) and gold, falling, exhausted on the masses of corpses; this was the sight that that unhappy city gave.'¹⁴³⁸

¹⁴³⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴³¹ P.M. Holt: *Egypt*; op cit; p.156.

¹⁴³² Ibid; p.155.

¹⁴³³ G. Hanotaux/ H. Deherain: *Histoire*; op cit; p. 204-5.

¹⁴³⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴³⁵ Ibid; p. 387.

¹⁴³⁶ Al-Jabarti: *Al-Jabarti*, op cit; pp 67-8.

¹⁴³⁷ Officer Malus detailed account of the massacre of the population in G. Hanotaux/Deherain: *Histoire*; op cit; pp 406-7.

¹⁴³⁸ Ibid.

Failing in their siege of Acre, and weakened by a much fiercer resistance than they first anticipated on the part of the Mamluks reinforced by Muslim volunteers (Mekkans, Moroccans, Algerians and Tunisians), which cut considerably their numbers and equipment, the French retreated from Egypt two years after the campaign began.¹⁴³⁹

Following the French failure, nearly a century later, the British entered the country for noble aims, too, such as to resolve the Egyptian debt situation, and, of course, to fight 'Muslim fanaticism'. Lord Cromer, who was to the British Commissioner, but de facto ruler of Egypt,¹⁴⁴⁰ expresses such noble aims:

'Let us, in Christian charity, make every possible allowance for the moral and intellectual shortcomings of the Egyptians, and do whatever can be done to rectify them.'¹⁴⁴¹

In truth the British aims were the same as the French, one of them being to assert Western Christian rule. British intervention, according to Morley, meant 'Egypt will be wrested from Muslim fanaticism, from military revolution, and he commented that France would benefit, for 'Muslim agitation' might otherwise spread to Tunis and Algiers.'¹⁴⁴² Returning the favour, the Frenchman, Emile de Lavelaye, assured the British that in Egypt they had a tacit mandate from Europe.¹⁴⁴³ And just as national rivalries faded in the pursuit of this aim, so did political and ideological rivalries fade, too. Daniel, thus, observes:

'Deeper than the imperial rivalries, there was at this time a range of European feeling about Muslim nations; the French, whether radical or Catholic, set up the power to civilise against the fanaticism of 'Musulmans,' British conservatives saw the need to impose sound government, and Liberals to impose reform.'¹⁴⁴⁴

Sir A.C. Lyall of the British Foreign Office recalled the ancient expulsion of Christian power from Egypt and added:

'Moslems can hardly complain if Christianity and civilisation are now taking their revenge.'¹⁴⁴⁵

¹⁴³⁹ See G. Hanotaux/Deherain: *Histoire*, Vol 5; op cit.

¹⁴⁴⁰ Ibid; pp. 60-1.

¹⁴⁴¹ Lord Cromer: *Modern Egypt*; (London; 1908); 2 Vols; Vol 2; p. 538.

¹⁴⁴² Viscount J. Morley: *Egyptian Policy; a Retrospect*; in *Fortnightly Review*; 1 July and 1 August issues; 1882; in N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe and Empire*; op cit; p.399.

¹⁴⁴³ E. De Lavelaye: *Egypt for the Egyptians*; in the *Fortnightly Review*; 1 December 1882.

¹⁴⁴⁴ N. Daniel: *Islam, Europe and Empire*; op cit; p. 407.

¹⁴⁴⁵ Sir A.C. Lyall: *Foreign Office /633/ 12*; pp. 37-40.

The other aim was to loot Egypt. The loot of Egypt proceeded with the complicity of native Egyptian elites, the Khedive, above all, who was in apparent control, but real rule being in Western hands. One of the Egyptian rulers, Ismail Pasha, the Khedive, was put in control of the country in 1863 by Western powers. He was luxurious, voluptuous, ambitious, fond of display, and devoid of principles.¹⁴⁴⁶ Over and above the millions wasted in entertainments, in largesse, in sensuality, in the erection of numerous palaces, he threw away millions on diverse failed schemes.¹⁴⁴⁷ To finance these, he borrowed heavily. A long series of loans amounting nominally to £68.5 millions were negotiated by major banking firms: Oppenheim, Fruhling and Goshen, the Anglo-Egyptian, and Bischoffsheim, and were raised successively between 1862 and 1873.¹⁴⁴⁸ A brief scrutiny of some such loans shows how the ruling elites borrowed in the name of the state, at extravagant rates, under conditions which ended in bankrupting their country.¹⁴⁴⁹ When the Egyptians, led by Arabi, sought to alter this reality by mounting an uprising, they were bombarded into submission in 1882, and Western control re-established,¹⁴⁵⁰ and the loot of the country under the same Western-controlled Egyptian elites proceeded. Writing in 1884, Le Bon says:

‘The Egyptian peasants are going to be just like the Hindu, and find themselves caught in unforgiving claws; formidable and quiet, which crush quietly until nothing is left to extract. From the figures published by M. Van den Berg in 1878, out of a total of 1.4 bn French Francs, totalling from five loans, the European financiers have retained (in all sorts of forms: commissions, etc) the amount of 522 millions; 875 millions have reached the Egyptian government; that latter had already paid, and for very long, the whole amount of the loans it has contracted just by paying interests on such debt.’¹⁴⁵¹

The looting of Egypt proceeded under the watchful Western eye, the staggering amounts taken out of the country in the 20th century recently revealed by a former Egyptian politician in the know.¹⁴⁵²

¹⁴⁴⁶ Viscount Milner: *England in Egypt*; (Edward Arnold; London; 1907); p.176.

¹⁴⁴⁷ Ibid; p.177.

¹⁴⁴⁸ M Morsy: *North Africa*; op cit; p. 173.

¹⁴⁴⁹ J.C.B. Richmond: *Egypt 1798-1952*; (Methuen & Co Ltd; London; 1977); pp. 100-1.

¹⁴⁵⁰ Ibid; pp. 129-31.

¹⁴⁵¹ Note in G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation*; op cit; p. 463.

¹⁴⁵² M. Haykal: Haykal; *Al-Jazeera*-25 August 05; 21-22 pm; seen by this author.

Algeria:

The same stages and strategy are obvious in the colonisation of Algeria (1830-1962) by the French.

First begins the demonising of the Turks under whose protection Algeria was. Volnay, for instance, in his *Considerations sur la Guerre des Turcs*, wrote of the Turks' fanaticism, ignorance and violent prejudices, and their 'spreading of the plague':

'It is these barbarians who brought this scourge; it is they, who, by their stupid fanaticism, keep alive the disease by spreading its germs. If just for this reason could perish their rule. May other people establish themselves in their place, and that the sea and the land were freed of their enslavement.'¹⁴⁵³

Then, once more, 'Islamic fanaticism' comes to the fore. Pananti who had resided in the country early in the 19th century, says:

'These degraded people... monsters who vie with each other in the deepest hatred and bitterest hostility towards Christianity and civilisation'.¹⁴⁵⁴

Abbé Raynal describes the degradation and the misery brought about by Islamic despotism, noting that the Muslim 'invaders' destroyed Christian civilisation of North Africa 'by their genius for destruction and their fanaticism, and replaced it with slavery and tyranny,' and so he calls for a Christian conquest to free Barbary from 'a handful of barbarians'.¹⁴⁵⁵

For J. Grey Jackson:

'The only solution is conquest, and the conquerors should then set up a firm government to quell the inhabitants' religious prejudices, until they are reconciled to a rational government, mild compared to the present despotism. The only reason for hostility on the part of the inhabitants is to be their religious fanaticism'.¹⁴⁵⁶

For Jackson, this conquest might not be welcomed by those who are supposed to be liberated, but once their fanaticism and bigotry are

¹⁴⁵³ Volnay: *Oeuvres Completes*; (Paris; 1864); p. 765.

¹⁴⁵⁴ F. Pananti: *Narrative of a Residence in Algiers*; Tr E. Blaquiére: (London; 1818 F.); p 416.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Abbe Raynal: *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans l'Afrique*; (Paris; 1826); Vol I; Pp 106 fwd and 137.

¹⁴⁵⁶ James Grey Jackson: *An Account of Timbuctu and Hausa*; (London; 1820); p 463.

overcome, they would realise how much their situation had improved.¹⁴⁵⁷

Algeria also needed to be conquered so as to remove 'Muslim piracy which infested the Mediterranean'.¹⁴⁵⁸ The view that the Barbary corsairs were slaying countless thousands of Christians was a powerful call for action against the 'nest of pirates' (Algeria).¹⁴⁵⁹ Admiral Nelson in 1799 hailed: 'never let us talk of the cruelty of the African slave trade while we permit such horrid war (piracy)'.¹⁴⁶⁰

The appeal made in 1858 by Monseignor Pavy, Bishop of Algiers, for the erection of the Cathedral de Notre Dame d'Afrique in Algiers dwelt on the horrors of 'la piraterie Musulmane' (Muslim piracy). Monseignor Pavy insisted that the conquest of 1830 of Algeria had brought 'these horrors to an end'.¹⁴⁶¹

In 1884, Sir Lambert Playfair, once a consul at Algiers, wrote a book entitled: *The Scourge of Christendom*, which epitomises the conventional view of the previous three centuries, of Barbary Corsairs capturing Christian vessels and enslaving their seamen; and worse, even, the Regencies of the Barbary Coast were nominally ruled by the 'Infidel Turk'.¹⁴⁶²

Of course Algerian piracy was just a myth to justify conquest. Piracy in the 18th century and centuries before, in its near entirety, was the work of Christian Europe.¹⁴⁶³ The English Sea Dogs and the Maltese Knights of St John terrorised the seas.¹⁴⁶⁴ Far from being a den of pirates, Algiers was a recognised port of call for English shipping in the 16th century; and so was Tunis, a port of call for Christian shipping.¹⁴⁶⁵ No less remarkable, Fisher points out, was the competition for permanent commercial concessions in those areas.¹⁴⁶⁶ If there was Barbary piracy, it came as a response to the piracy of

¹⁴⁵⁷ James.Grey Jackson: *An Account*. Pp 457-63 in A. Thomson: *Barbary and Enlightenment*: (Brill; Leiden; 1987); p. 131.

¹⁴⁵⁸ P. Earle: *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*; op cit; p. 10.

¹⁴⁵⁹ A. Thomson: *Barbary*; op cit; p. 128.

¹⁴⁶⁰ Quoted by Perkins and Douglas Morris: *Gunfire in Barbary*, (Havant; 1982); p. 37.

¹⁴⁶¹ In *Revue Africaine*; Vol 2 (1858); pp 337-52.

¹⁴⁶² C. Lloyd: *English Corsairs on the Barbary Coast*; op cit; p. 18.

¹⁴⁶³ See:

-F.Braudel: *Grammaire des Civilisations*; (Flammarion, 1987); p. 89 fwd..

-M.L. de Mas Latrie: *Traites de paix*; op cit.

¹⁴⁶⁴ A.Thomson: *Barbary*; op cit; final Chapter: Towards Conquest.

¹⁴⁶⁵ In G. Fisher: *Barbary Legend*; op cit; pp. 123-4.

¹⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

which the Muslims were victims, and which had been going on for centuries.¹⁴⁶⁷ Muslim piracy, moreover, was never as destructive and as cruel as the Christian, or as depicted in history. Barbary piracy, in fact, as demonstrated by Fisher, most particularly, was one of the greatest myths of modern history to justify the colonisation of Algeria and the whole of North Africa.¹⁴⁶⁸ This was a pattern established long before, the Portuguese conquest of Ceuta in 1415, for instance, was blamed on Muslim piracy, and similar justification used for Spanish attacks on Mers el-Kebir and Oran early in the following century.¹⁴⁶⁹ More importantly, the French blaming Algerian piracy to justify the invasion of Algeria in 1830 rests on hardly any solid ground. Godechot notes how:

‘While the Barbary danger had disappeared on the European coast for more than a hundred years the Christian danger existed on the African shores until the end of the eighteenth century.’¹⁴⁷⁰

Algeria had no fleet left in the 19th century to justify the argument of piracy, this fleet having terminated its life in the 18th century.¹⁴⁷¹ When William Shaler, the new American ambassador arrived in Algiers, in 1815, all he could see of the Algerian fleet was four frigates, five corvettes, one brig, and a galley, a total of eleven vessels.¹⁴⁷² These were to suffer final annihilation by Lord Exmouth’s famed bombardment of Algiers in 1816.¹⁴⁷³ There was no fleet and there were barely any Christian captives, either. In 1830, when the French took Algiers, the number of Christian captives in the city was a mere hundred.¹⁴⁷⁴ Still, it was under such noble premise, of seeking to remove Islamic piracy that the French invasion in 1830 took place. Barbour notes how:

‘In reality there is little doubt that the basic motive of the French Government was its desire to restore the tottering credit

¹⁴⁶⁷ A. Mieli: *La Science Arabe*; op cit; p. 45.

¹⁴⁶⁸ G. Fisher: *Barbary Legend*; op cit; L. Valensi: *North Africa*; op cit;

¹⁴⁶⁹ G. Fisher: *Barbary Legend*; p. 24.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Godechot: *la Course Maltaise*; *Revue Africaine*; 1952 in N. Barbour: *A Survey*; op cit; p. 38.

¹⁴⁷¹ See for instance:

L. Valensi: *Le Maghreb avant la Prise d’Alger*; (Paris; 1969).

J. Mathieux: *Trafic et prix de l’Homme en Mediterranee au 17 et 18 Siecles*; *ANNALES: Economies, Societes, Civilisations*: Vol 9: pp. 157-64.

F. Braudel: *Civilisation materielle*; 15-18^{em} siecle; Vol 3; (Paris; 1979).

¹⁴⁷² A. Hollingsworth Miller: *One man’s View: William Shaler and Algiers*; in *Through Foreign Eyes*; (ed A.A. Heggoy), op cit; pp. 7-55; at p. 18.

¹⁴⁷³ C. Lloyd: *English Corsairs on the Barbary Coast*, op cit; pp. 163-4.

¹⁴⁷⁴ N. Barbour: *A Survey*; op cit; p. 36.

of the regime by a military success; and to win for the Restoration Government the credit which Napoleon had lost by the evacuation of Egypt. In the event Algiers was duly captured and the achievement inspired a number of laudatory poems throughout Europe including one in the dialect of Genoa.¹⁴⁷⁵

The expedition had been accompanied by propaganda to the effect that the French were coming to liberate the Algerians from their Turkish tyrants:

‘We French, your friends [said one document], are leaving for Algiers. We are going to drive out your tyrants, the Turks who persecute you, who steal your goods, and never cease menacing your lives . . . our presence on your territory is not to make war on you but only on the person of your Pasha. Abandon your Pasha; follow our advice; it is good advice and can only make you happy.’¹⁴⁷⁶

The real aims of the French invasion, however, became apparent soon after their entry into Algeria. One of them was to establish Christianity and to remove Islam. General De Bourmont said to his soldiers, ‘You have renewed the crusades.’¹⁴⁷⁷ ‘Our war in Africa is a continuation of the Crusades,’ said Minister Poujoulat to General Bugeaud in 1844.¹⁴⁷⁸ A crusading mind dressed in a modern form, to reform the Algerian personality, here expressed by Antoine Salles about Cardinal Lavigerie:

‘He sought for Algeria to escape the yoke of Islam, which for centuries, suffocated its rise and prosperity, but on condition that it placed itself under the protection of France once its freedom was secured. This is a remarkable programme to turn Christian and to turn French this land which was according to the Cardinal an extension of France.’¹⁴⁷⁹

The work by Christian missionaries to Christianise Algeria has been examined briefly already, and plenty more can be gleaned from the

¹⁴⁷⁵ *A Spedizion d'Arge*; (Genoa; 1834).

¹⁴⁷⁶ Baudicourt: *La Guerre et le gouvernement de l'Algerie*; (Paris; 1853); p. 160.

¹⁴⁷⁷ A. Surre-Garcia: *L'Image du sarrasin dans les mentalites de la litterature Occitanes: De Toulouse a Tripoli*, From Colloque held between 6 and 8 December, 1995, University of Toulouse; (AMAM, Toulouse, 1997). pp 181-9; p.186.

¹⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁴⁷⁹ A. Salles: *Le Cardinal Lavigerie et l'Influence Francaise en Afrique*; Lyon; 1893; in N. Daniel: *Islam; Europe*; op cit; p. 332.

rich literature on the subject in the missionary organ: *The Moslem World*.

The second aim, as usual, was to loot Algeria. The country's treasure-chests were ransacked as soon as the French took the country.¹⁴⁸⁰ Then, soon after, the French began 'to drive away the mass of savages (the Algerians) to make room for better men.'¹⁴⁸¹ North Africa in general and Algeria in particular, was seen as a land where the value of French life would be preserved by a colon (European settler) majority since the Muslim was a hostile element, a roadblock to progress.¹⁴⁸² According to Etienne, the powerful and influential deputy of Oran (1881-1921), the Muslims had to stand aside to make way for the inevitable march of progress and technology in Algeria.¹⁴⁸³ For Marmier, Algeria was a land for a new France, to grow what the old France lacked, house the surplus population, expand industry and shipping, with no room for inferior natives.¹⁴⁸⁴ V.A. Hain of the Societie Coloniale de l'Etat d'Alger considered the whole population of Algeria beyond all redemption and fit only to be removed from the land.¹⁴⁸⁵ To justify the extermination of the Algerians, like the extermination of the Indians in North America, like the frontier settlers in the western United States, the colons held that there was a constant threat from an uprising, but in this case it was not Sioux or Cheyenne Indians, but Algerian Muslims.¹⁴⁸⁶

In seeking to achieve such aims, under the command of General (later Marshal) Thomas-Robert Bugeaud, the French army devastated the country, its towns and cities, crops, and livestock; large tribes, even those friendly to the French, were all exterminated.¹⁴⁸⁷ 'Soldiers', said General Bugeaud in 1841: 'you have often beaten the Arabs. You will beat them again, but to rout them is a small thing; they must be subdued.'

To civilians he added:

¹⁴⁸⁰ J. Fontana: *The Distorted Past*, op cit; p.137

¹⁴⁸¹ V.A. Hain: *A La Nation. Sur Alger*; (Paris; 1832).

¹⁴⁸² J.J. Cook: *The Maghrib through French Eyes; 1880-1929*; in *Through Foreign Eyes*; op cit; pp. 57-92. p. 58.

¹⁴⁸³ Ibid; at p. 77.

¹⁴⁸⁴ X. Marmier: *Lettres sur l'Algerie*; (Paris; 1847).

¹⁴⁸⁵ V.A.Hain: *A La Nation*; op cit; pp 31; 58 fwd.

¹⁴⁸⁶ J.J. Cook: *The Maghrib*; op cit; p. 63.

¹⁴⁸⁷ H Alleg et al: *La Guerre d'Algerie*: op cit; vol 1; p.77.

‘The Arabs must be reduced to submission so that only the French flag stands up on this African soil.’¹⁴⁸⁸

A French army report from an operation in the Kabyle region says:

‘Our soldiers returning from the expedition were themselves ashamed.... About 18,000 trees had been cut down; houses had been burnt; women, children, and old men had been killed. The unfortunate women particularly excited cupidity by the habit of wearing silver ear rings, leg rings, and arm rings. These rings have no catches like French bracelets. Fastened in youth to the limbs of girls they cannot be removed when they are grown up. To get them off, our soldiers used to cut off their limbs and leave them alive in this mutilated condition.’¹⁴⁸⁹

Every Arab, every Kabyle was treated as a belligerent; his cattle and his crops, his house and his tent, his wife and his child, were fair game for the invading armies.¹⁴⁹⁰ The French general, Saint-Arnaud refers again and again to this systematic and ruthless destruction, to incidents often trivial enough singly but terrible in their cumulative effect:

‘We are among the mountains between Miliana and Cherchell. We have fired few shots, but we are burning all the *douars* (hamlets), all the villages, all the huts. The enemy flees before us, taking his flocks with him’ (April 5 1842). ‘The Beni Manacer’s country is superb . . . We have burnt everything, destroyed everything. Oh! this war, this war! How many women and children, seeking refuge in the Atlas snows, have died there of cold and misery.... Our casualties were five killed and forty wounded’ (April 7, 1842). ‘We lay waste, we burn, we plunder, we destroy the crops and the trees. As for engagements, few or none; just a hundred or two wretched Arabs who fire on the rearguard and wound a few men’ (June 5, 1842). ‘When I last wrote I was among the Brazes. I laid waste and burnt everything. Now I am among the Sindgads. The same thing on a grand scale; it’s a real public granary . . . A few tribesmen brought in their horses as tokens of submission. I refused because I wanted a general submission, and began burning once more’ (October 1, 1842). ‘Here I am with my little army, burning the *douars* and huts of the insurgents, raiding their silos and sending to Miliana all the corn and barley that I draw from them... A few shots have been fired. Today I am making a halt to continue emptying silos and

¹⁴⁸⁸ Rousset: *La Conquete de l’Algerie*; (1889). In N. Barbour: *A Survey*; op cit; p. 43.

¹⁴⁸⁹ Baudicourt: *La Guerre et le gouvernement de l’Algerie*; op cit; p. 372.

¹⁴⁹⁰ W. Blunt: *Desert Hawk*; Methuen & Co. Ltd; London; 1947; p. 167.

burning villages and huts. I shall leave them no peace till they submit' (October 5, 1842). 'I shall not leave a single tree standing in their orchards, not a head on the shoulders of these wretched Arabs . . . Those are the orders that I have received from General Changarnier, and they will be punctually executed. I shall burn everything, kill everyone . . .' (January 18, 1843). 'On the 4th I reached Haimda. I burned everything in my path and destroyed the pretty village, but it was impossible to proceed further . . . When day dawned we saw that two foot of snow had fallen. No sign of a track, nothing; just snow, and more snow. I started off, and we had hardly made a quarter of a mile when we came upon a horrible sight . . . heaps of bodies huddled together, frozen to death during the night. They were the Beni-Naâseur whose villages and huts I had burnt, whom I had driven before me . . .' (February 8, 1843).¹⁴⁹¹

The aim was the removal of the Algerians from the land for the New France. In the process, the French killed and starved the Algerians, confiscating their lands, ruining them financially, and decimating the basis of their livelihood, their livestock, killing a total of 18 million sheep, and 3.5 million cattle and one million camels between 1830 and 1845.¹⁴⁹² Destitute, the Algerians starved in their millions. Between November 1867 and June 1868, alone, 300,000 died.¹⁴⁹³ Some sources say that the Algerian population fell from 10 million in 1830 to 2.1 million in 1872.¹⁴⁹⁴ Others speak of the more realistic figure of between eight to ten million Algerians losing their lives to the various uprisings, epidemics, hunger and disease between 1830 and 1962.¹⁴⁹⁵ One of the apologists and theorists of the French colonisation, Dr Bodichon, had held:

'It matters little that France in her political conduct goes beyond the limits of common morality at times; the essential thing is that she establishes a lasting colony and that, later, she brings European civilisation to these barbaric countries. When a project which is to the advantage of all humanity is to be

¹⁴⁹¹ Ibid; pp. 167-8.

¹⁴⁹² N.Abdı quoted in Louis Blin: *l'Algerie du Sahara au Sahel*, (l'Harmattan, Paris, 1990); p. 68.

¹⁴⁹³ A.G. Slama: *La Guerre d'Algerie*, (Decouvertes, Paris, 1996); p 18. C.Ageron: *Histoire*; op cit; p. 37.

¹⁴⁹⁴ Louis Blin: *l'Algerie du Sahara*; op cit, p. 68.

¹⁴⁹⁵ Lacheraf, in L.Blin: *l'Algerie*; op cit; note 3, p 112.

carried out, the shortest path is the best. Now, it is certain that the shortest path is terror. Without violating the laws of morality, or international jurisprudence, we can fight our African enemies by powder and fire, joined by famine, internal division, war between Arabs and Kabyles, between the tribes of the Tell and those of the Sahara, by brandy, corruption and disorganisation. That is the easiest thing in the world to do.¹⁴⁹⁶

Combined Algerian resistance with Islamic values reversed the strategy, and Algerians, unlike others who submitted to a similar onslaught, survived.

c. The Case of Iraq Today:

It is needless to dwell on Iraq today, everyone being aware of what is going on. All that is necessary here is a summary of the situation. The West fostered the demonic figure of Saddam Hussein, whom they had themselves helped to reach and stay in power. Then they used his crimes against his people and his neighbours, which they themselves supported by every means, to enhance his barbaric image. Then, to justify invasion, they created the usual threat of Iraq armed with weapons of mass destruction. They unleashed a terrible onslaught on Iraq, which they disguised behind the usual noble rhetoric of operation freedom, democracy, rebuilding of Iraq, and similar empty expressions used for centuries in relation to the Muslim world. In truth, all that we see in Iraq is the killing of hundreds of thousands of its population, and the wiping out of many of its cities and villages. As per usual, in front of our eyes, Iraq's oil wealth is being looted,¹⁴⁹⁷ and much worse, this occupation, like all previous Western occupations, has used the ethnic and other divisions amongst Muslims to exacerbate them by a variety of obvious and hidden tactics. The misery coming out of Iraq, or whatever little we are allowed to see, is an affront to humanity, and an assault on decency. Here, briefly, are extracts of what the latest UN report on the country, as outlined in *The Independent*, say:

¹⁴⁹⁶ Cited in C.H. Favrod: *Le FLN et l'Algerie*; (Paris; Plon; 1962); p. 31.

¹⁴⁹⁷ See article by K. Mahdi: Iraqis will never accept this sellout to the oil corporations; *The Guardian*; 16 January 2007; p. 28.

‘Torture in the country (now called the Republic of Fear) may even be worse than it was under Saddam, the UN special investigator on torture said yesterday...

The report, from an even handed senior UN official, is in sharp contrast with the hopes of George Bush and Tony Blair, when in 2003 they promised to bring democracy and respect for human rights to the people of Iraq. The brutal tortures committed in the prisons of the regime overthrown in 2003 are being emulated and surpassed in the detention centres of the present US and British backed Iraqi government. ‘Detainees’ bodies show signs of beating, using electric cables, wounds in different parts of their bodies including in the head and genitals, broken bones of legs and hands, electric and cigarette burns... The bodies in Baghdad morgue ‘often bear signs of severe torture including acid induced injuries and burns caused by chemical substances, missing skin, broken bones, missing eyes, and wounds caused by power drills or nails,’ the UN report said. Those not killed by those abuses are shot in the head.’¹⁴⁹⁸

¹⁴⁹⁸ UN Report in *The Independent* 22 September 06; p. 2.

3. 'Muslim Barbarism': Its Countless Other Uses

The Christian West did not just feel entitled to take Muslim lands and wealth, but Muslim barbarism also justified the acquisition of everything else that the Muslim world possessed, and that was felt ought to be transferred to the Christian West because of its superiority. The recent looting of Iraq, as is well known, also included all the precious antiquities and treasures of Baghdad's museums, which were literally emptied of their most valuable collections.

Likewise, previous Western military invasions ended in the looting of all sorts of Muslim precious possessions, on the ground that the Muslims were too barbaric to keep them. MacKenzie,¹⁴⁹⁹ like Le Bon,¹⁵⁰⁰ a century before him, noted that in the process of European imperialist domination of Islamic countries, whole chunks of Islamic culture were removed. Several artists were members of official diplomatic, scientific and military expeditions, even present at acts of imperial aggression.¹⁵⁰¹ MacKenzie notes how:

'Some extolled the virtues of French rule in North Africa and bought property there to capitalise upon it themselves. Many, however, went further in the looting of antiquities of all sorts, robbing tombs, buildings etc, and in this respect, just as Nochlin put it, some of the artists distinguished between visual beauty and moral quality; the moral superiority of the West, able to preserve while the East destroyed, justifying such plunder.'¹⁵⁰²

Indeed, as with every deed, an intellectual justification was given to such looting on account of Muslim barbarism as seen here in relation to lands under the Turks. It was held, for instance, that the castle on the Island of Candia that was built by the Venetians, was now 'ruined at the hands of the Turks... 'for it is usual with the Turks to let their fortifications and public buildings run to decay.'¹⁵⁰³

¹⁴⁹⁹ J. M. MacKenzie: *Orientalism, History, Theory and the Arts*; (Manchester University Press; 1995); p.53.

¹⁵⁰⁰ G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation*; op cit; p. 466 ff.

¹⁵⁰¹ J. MacKenzie: *Orientalism*; op cit; p.53.

¹⁵⁰² Nochlin in J. M. MacKenzie: *Orientalism*; p.53

¹⁵⁰³ C. Thompson: *Travels through Turkey in Asia...*; (London; 1754); vol 2; p. 277.

Likewise, it was held that the Turks treat Egypt as a farm not as an estate with priceless antiquities.¹⁵⁰⁴

18th century writers held that the Turks were ignorant and hostile towards other cultures, and could not be aware of the treasures they possessed, therefore, as long as such treasures stayed in Ottoman lands, they were bound to decay.¹⁵⁰⁵ Craven points out that the Turks not only build their houses on ruins but also do not let travellers take anything away.¹⁵⁰⁶ Chandler proposes the idea that people in the Levant trade should apply to persons concerned for permission to remove these antiquities. If not, the Turks should be secretly persuaded with all available gold in order to rescue these valuable treasures from barbarism. According to him, these relics were suffered to lie neglected, exposed in the open air, whereas they should be under the safe custody of (Western) museums.¹⁵⁰⁷ As far as Turkish attitudes are concerned, they don't even care to look at these treasures:

‘The attention and knowledge of our guests (Turks) was wholly confined to agriculture, their stocks and herds. They called the ruin of the temple an old castle, and we informed from their answers to our inquiries about it that the magnificence of the building had never excited in them one reflection, or indeed attracted their observation even for a moment.’¹⁵⁰⁸

As Cirakman notes, this concern would become more and more prevalent in the nineteenth century and most of the antiquities would be removed by permission (or otherwise) to European museums.¹⁵⁰⁹

We learn from the travels of Edward Brown that there was already a profitable enterprise among many European adventurers who, like him, travelled through the empire in order to collect (or rather steal) valuable and ancient materials. This is in accord with the prevailing tendency. For this allowed Europeans to feel vindicated to plunder what they thought of as theirs. He describes the reasons he took this ‘tiring journey’ in the following words:

‘Our friends proposed that we should make the tour of a part of the Ottoman Empire, beginning with Egypt, in order to collect Medals, Stones, Manuscripts, and other curiosities for which there never was so great a demand as at present through all

¹⁵⁰⁴ E. Brown: *The Travels of Edward Brown*; (London; 1753); vol 2; p. 8.

¹⁵⁰⁵ A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 168.

¹⁵⁰⁶ E. Craven: *A Journey through Crimea*; (London; 1789); pp. 333-4.

¹⁵⁰⁷ R. Chandler: *Travels in Asia Minor*; (Dublin; 1775); p. 38.

¹⁵⁰⁸ Ibid; p. 153.

¹⁵⁰⁹ A. Cirakman: *From the Terror*; op cit; p. 169.

Europe, particularly in Italy, France and England where for genuine relics of antiquity no price whatsoever is held to be extravagant.¹⁵¹⁰

The concept of Islamic barbarism (meaning here cultural/intellectual inferiority) is also widely used in rhetoric by a constant belittling of the Muslims and the suppression of their accomplishments from knowledge, the aim being to kill in Muslims the self belief in their capacity to rise to high culture, science and civilisation, and also to kill their belief in their own culture. Somehow, if the Muslims can be convinced that as humans they are inferior, and that their culture is also inferior, their utter dependence on the West would become slavish. This explains the rant about Muslim ineptness, irrationalism, etc, and the suppression of Muslim heritage from knowledge. This has succeeded a long way as can be seen through the adoption by many elites in the Muslim world of all things Western, especially the worst amongst them, which they impose by force on their own people, and by the utter contempt these elites have for anything Islamic. About these elites, whom they call Brown Sahibs, Sardar and Davies write:

‘The perpetual identity crises and self-hate that brown sahibs go through produce an epidemic of self-blame. And just like herpes, which no matter how hard is scratched irritates more and more, this self-blame takes the brown sahib to his logical conclusion: in a final suicidal attempt to become what he can never become he eradicates the one thing that can save him from the brink of insanity, his original identity.’¹⁵¹¹

And:

‘The brown sahib is a rabid defender of everything Western; and since he cannot banish his Oriental self within him, like Kipling he turns on himself and his own kind.... He thus fulfils the ultimate desire of his programmers, the white sahib, by going the distance that even the white sahib would not go.’¹⁵¹²

‘Muslim barbarism and evil’ has also served as an ideological weapon to frighten people away from Islam, the faith, and this from the Middle Ages to our day. Blanks and Frassetto note how:

‘During the Middle Ages, Islamic civilisation was so far ahead of its Christian rival, offering enticing advances in architecture, law, literature, philosophy, and indeed in most

¹⁵¹⁰ E. Brown: *The Travels*; op cit; vol 1; p. 207.

¹⁵¹¹ Z. Sardar; M.W. Davies: *Distorted Imagination*; op cit; p. 86.

¹⁵¹² Ibid; pp. 81 and 86.

areas of cultural activity. It was therefore from a position of military and perhaps, more importantly, cultural weakness that Christian Europe developed negative images, some of which survive to the present day. In part, this hostility was the result of continued political and military conflict, but it likewise ensued from a Western sense of cultural inferiority.

Thus the Western need to construct an image of the Muslim, of the other, was a twofold process that came to dominate the pre modern discourse concerning Islam.

On the other hand, it created an image of the Saracen, Moor, or Turk that was wholly alien and wholly evil. In both popular and learned literature, Muslims were portrayed as cowardly, duplicitous, lustful, self-indulgent, pagans who worshipped idols and a trinity of false gods. On the other hand, the creation of such a blatantly false stereotype enabled Western Christians to define themselves. Indeed, the Muslim became in a sense, a photographic negative of the self perception of an ideal Christian self image, one that portrayed Europeans as brave, virtuous believers in the one true God and the one true faith. By debasing the image of their rivals, Western Christians were enhancing their own self image and trying to build a self confidence in the face of a more powerful and more culturally sophisticated enemy.¹⁵¹³

Tolan also says:

‘Both as a rival religion and as a rival civilization, Islam was tremendously successful. It was hence appealing, intriguing, and frightening. The attraction of Muslim learning, Muslim culture, and Muslim sophistication was extremely strong... But the more Christians were attracted to Islam, the stronger others felt the need to condemn it - for it was this attraction, more than the might of Muslim armies, that was most threatening to Christendom.’¹⁵¹⁴

The principles of Islam are ‘neither so pernicious nor so absurd as many have imagined,’ notes Jackson, and yet ‘they have been vilified from error or for the purpose of exalting Christian doctrine.’¹⁵¹⁵

¹⁵¹³ D.R. Blanks-M. Frassetto: Introduction; in *Western Perceptions*; (Blanks and Frassetto ed); p. 3.

¹⁵¹⁴ J.V. Tolán ed: *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam*; (Routledge; London; 1996); preface ;pp. xix-xx.

¹⁵¹⁵ James.Grey Jackson: *An Account of the Empire of Morocco*; 3rd ed; (London; 1814); p 208.

Watt adds that Western Christendom found it necessary to paint such dark images to compensate for the feeling of inferiority as Europe was tributary to Islam in terms of science and learning.¹⁵¹⁶

Likewise, today, Islam the fastest growing religion in the world does frighten the West. It also frightens in other respects, which explains the relentless onslaught on it (Islam). As Lueg says:

‘The Enlightenment and the related separation of religion and state count among the most important aspects of Western superiority. In our eyes whoever fails to fulfil this separation is immature and bound by religion. We believe we have displaced religion from the public arena into the private one, and have thereby somehow overcome it. Islam nonetheless terrifies us as a *religion* - and it is precisely through this religious element, to which we restrict our perception, that the rift between the Orient and the Occident is made even deeper. Anything we hear from the Islamic world, we assume to be stated from an inferior position, and in a religious context, i.e. that of Islam. We do not try to understand Islam as a religion, but instead often reject it on principle. I am not defending Islam or any other faith, but one cannot help noticing what terror a religion manages to spread in a supposedly secular society. The reactions to Islamic movements are anything but rational and enlightened. Yet much of the Western media set much store by factual and objective reporting.’¹⁵¹⁷

Esposito also notes:

‘The focus on radicalism and the equation of Islam with an extremism that threatens to confront the West has become commonplace. Too often we are exposed in the media and literature to a sensationalized, monolithic approach which reinforces facile generalizations and stereotypes rather than challenging our understanding of the “who” and the “why” of history, the specific causes or reasons behind the headlines. In government and professional discussions, moreover, as was the case with McCarthy-era anticommunism, not to be simply dismissive of Islamic activism is often viewed as being biased or sympathetic toward the enemy.’¹⁵¹⁸

¹⁵¹⁶ M.W. Watt: *l’Influence de l’Islam Revue des Etudes Islamiques*, Vol 41; p. 154

¹⁵¹⁷ A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; pp. 21-2.

¹⁵¹⁸ J. Esposito *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; p. 173.

Western rhetoric also creates a false image of Muslim barbarism in many contexts to conceal its own, true barbarism. Lueg raises the argument of how the West cynically uses the issue of human rights abuse to blame such abuse on Islam, when in truth, it is the Muslims who suffer first and foremost from human rights abuse at the hands of the West and/or its client states. She writes:

‘Human rights, which received world-wide recognition through the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are often cited as a ‘Western product’ and another symbol of Occidental superiority. Islam, by contrast, is portrayed as being hostile to human rights, as an ideological structure which is virtually antithetical to the Western understanding of human rights.

The actual situation of human rights and democracy in most Islamic countries is certainly shocking. In many of these countries torture is commonplace, and press censorship, the death penalty and, above all, unequal treatment of men and women are to be found everywhere. These are all totally unacceptable conditions, which must be denounced constantly until the conditions of the people improve. Yet we must nonetheless ask who or what is responsible for these catastrophic conditions. The Western media again often make Islam out to be the main evil, and they love to divert our attention to the belief of ‘Islamic zealots’, namely that ‘human rights are an imported Western body of thought’ and are therefore to be rejected.’¹⁵¹⁹

Indeed by turning the tables, the West has blamed the lamentable condition of human rights on Islam when, in truth, the worst culprit, and by far, when it comes to violating human rights is the West itself. As reality around us shows, it is not an Islamic state that sponsors mass torture and disappearances. It is under Fascism, Nazism, and communism that this has occurred. It is also modern Western countries, the USA above all, that have sponsored, armed, and put and kept in power murderous dictatorships in South and Central America during the 1960s-1980s, which have slain, tortured to death, and disappeared hundreds of thousands of people.¹⁵²⁰ It is the West which props up mass-murdering, mass-torturing ‘Muslim’ regimes (which the West calls modern and moderate) that have wiped out in terrible circumstances hundreds of thousands of their own citizens. The flights and transfers, or prisoner

¹⁵¹⁹ A. Lueg: *The Perception of Islam*; op cit; p. 22.

¹⁵²⁰ Ward Churchill: *A Little Matter*; op cit; relevant chapters.

rendering between the West and mass torturing regimes, or incarcerations in secret camps, have been widely publicised in 2005-7.

There is another fundamental reason why we have the notion of Muslim barbarism emerging with greater force since the late 1980s - early 1990s. Islam has always been viewed as barbaric by the Christian West since the Middle Ages, and this has justified the continuous military onslaughts on Islamic lands. However after the Bolshevik revolution in 1917, and during the whole era of communism, down to the late 1980s, Islam has had a sort of reprieve from the usual onslaught. Once communism fell, the old war resumed with greater intensity. The highly influential American political thinker, Samuel Huntington, in his now famed *Clash of Civilisation* calls for both political and military reawakening of the West: 'To check the military expansion of both Confucian and Islamic states, to stop the reduction of the military capacity of the West, and to maintain the military capacity of the West vis à vis Asia... The West must keep enough military and economic power to protect its interests vis à vis non-Western civilisations.'¹⁵²¹

General Helmut Willman, chief of the Euro-corps, asserted that it was absolutely clear that the axis of threat against Europe has moved to the south.¹⁵²² Thus, the rising call today is 'for a crusade against the Green peril, the new universal enemy.'¹⁵²³

As Hippler and Lueg note:

'The idea of an Islamic threat is nothing new. It has deep historical roots that date back as far as the Crusades, which as is well known were invariably accompanied by anti-Semitic pogroms. In the 1970s, following the oil price crisis of 1973 (*The Oil Sheikhs are Turning Off our Oil Supplies*), and a little later in the context of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the issues were heavily emotionalised. This was also the case during the period of aeroplane hijackings by Palestinians, although sentiments then were marked more by anti-Arab/anti-Palestinian than religious feeling. As a result of the end of the Cold War, the perceived Islamic threat has, however, acquired a particularly explosive power in the 1990s. We no longer have the Soviet Union or communism to serve as enemies

¹⁵²¹ Foreign Affairs, Vol. 72, No. 5, 1993.

¹⁵²² *El Pais*, 7 July 1994.

¹⁵²³ M. Aguirre, director of studies at the Centro de Investigaciones para la paz (CIP), Madrid; and vice director at the Transnational Institute, Amsterdam.

justifying expensive and extensive military apparatuses. It was in the mid 1980s at the very latest that the search began for new enemies to justify arms budgets and offensive military policies, at first as part of the communist threat and then others in its place. First the 'War on Drugs', the somewhat absurd and naturally failed attempt to solve New York's drug problem by naval manoeuvres off the coast of South America and military operations in Bolivia, then 'terrorism', a term applied to real terrorists as well as to various unpleasant freedom movements in the Third World, which (of course) demanded military responses, were two such attempts during the 1980s. And as with the 'Islamic (or fundamentalist) threat' today, then too there were enough good reasons to be against drug dealers and terrorists. Neither of these social evils was ever fought seriously at its roots. Instead, they were exploited for other purposes. At that time the aim was to legitimise the newly-developed doctrine of *low intensity warfare*; today it is to justify high military expenditure when the traditional enemy has disappeared and we are objectively no longer threatened by conventional war. Fundamentalism, then, has not been invented by Western politicians, but is being used by them. Now, given the loss of the old military opponent, instead of reducing the military apparatus in the West to a symbolic vestige or getting rid of it altogether and thinking about 'security' completely afresh, new threats are being invented to serve the old purpose. This is our main problem, not an Islamic fundamentalist threat which, in any case, could only be dealt with by political and economic means.¹⁵²⁴

It is not just the end of communism that has triggered such an all out war on Islam; it is most of all the fear of resurgent Islam that triggers such a response, and the reason for this has been understood by many Western scholars themselves: the power of Islam to galvanise and prompt Muslim society forward again. Campbell notes:

'The latter decades of the sixth and the first two of the seventh century were marked by an excess of idolatry, and with the advent of the Prophet Mahomet who preached that there is one God and that the figuring in sculpture of the human figure was not to be tolerated, the warring tribes of Arabia Felix rapidly

¹⁵²⁴ J Hippler and A. Lueg: Introduction; in *The Next Threat*; op cit; p. 5.

became welded into a single people under one religious and military commander.¹⁵²⁵

Geanakoplos also observes:

‘For centuries before the advent of Muhammed in the sixth century, the primitive Bedouin tribes of Arabia had pursued their uneventful lives, interrupted at times perhaps to serve as minor allies to the Persian or Byzantines in their struggle with one another. Why this people, originating in the Arabian peninsula - unorganised, disunited, and backward - would one day be able to overthrow the great Persian empire and wrest from Byzantium some of its choicest provinces is one of the great questions of medieval history.’¹⁵²⁶

‘When Prophet Muhammed began preaching the word of Islam,’ Durant notes, ‘Arabia was a desert flotsam of idolatrous tribes; when he died it was a nation.’¹⁵²⁷

And Sarton:

‘Illiterate Bedouins, but they were absolutely unified and exalted by an ardent faith. In this, again, the Prophet was completely vindicated.’¹⁵²⁸

And when, as in Spain, the Muslims were slaughtering each other in the messy times of the early 11th century, and were threatened by Christian extinction, only Islam ‘had become the main cohesive force binding the Moriscos culturally, after their leaders had failed them politically,’ Monroe says.¹⁵²⁹

Gibbon also notes:

‘The Arabs and Saracens who spread their conquests from India to Spain, had languished in poverty and contempt, till Mahomet breathed into those savage bodies the soul of enthusiasm.’¹⁵³⁰

¹⁵²⁵ D. Campbell: *Arabian Medicine*, op cit.; p.32.

¹⁵²⁶ D. J. Geanakoplos: *Medieval Western Civilisation, and the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds*, (D.C. Heath and Company, Toronto, 1979); p.146.

¹⁵²⁷ W. Durant: *The Age of faith*, op cit; p.174.

¹⁵²⁸ G. Sarton: *The Incubation of Western Culture in the Middle East*, A George C. Keiser Foundation Lecture, March 29, 1950; (Washington DC 1951); p.26.

¹⁵²⁹ J.T. Monroe: *The Hispanic-Arabic World*: in Jose Rubia Barcia: *Americo Castro, and the Meaning of Spanish Civilisation*. (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1976) pp 69-90; p. 86.

¹⁵³⁰ E. Gibbon: *History of the Decline and fall of the Roman Empire*; quoted in R.W. Southern: *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*; (Harvard University Press; 1962); p.13.

In the same breath, however, Gibbon warns that the menace of Islam was only a memory that might serve to warn Europe not to indulge too freely in the prospect of endless security:

‘This apparent security should not tempt us to forget that new enemies, and unknown dangers, may possibly arise from some obscure people, scarcely visible in the map of the world.’¹⁵³¹

The philosopher Heine also understood this, when he reflected:

‘The genius of the Arabs, had never died completely but had fallen asleep in the quiet life of the Bedouin. Perhaps the Arabs are only awaiting the right call in order to storm out as before from their sultry wastelands, refreshed by sleep.’¹⁵³²

Thus, as Esposito notes:

‘There is an easy path and a hard one. The easy path is to view Islam and Islamic revivalism as a threat - to posit a global Pan-Islamic threat, monolithic in nature, a historic enemy whose faith and agenda are diametrically opposed to the West. This attitude leads to support for secular regimes at almost any cost rather than risking an Islamic-oriented government in power.

Exhilaration over the prospect of democratization in Eastern Europe contrasts sharply with the fear or at best silence of the U.S. government and indeed many in the West at the prospect of similar demands by Islamic populist movements in the Arab and broader Muslim world.’¹⁵³³

And as Jameelah sums up:

‘Islam is the only serious rival that Western civilisation has ever encountered in its history... The West hates and fears Islam because it challenges the very existence of everything it stands for. Although today the Muslims are unorganised, backward and impotent, politically, economically and militarily, the West has nothing to fear from actual power which is non-existent but is mortally afraid of our (Muslim) potential power.’¹⁵³⁴

It is, thus, the potential of Islam to unite and to revive its adherents from their long sleep, and to make of them a power again, that might, in the perception of many Westerners, revive the ten-century-old foe that has only been tamed in the 19th century. And so the rhetorical onslaught on Islamic barbarism proceeds.

¹⁵³¹ Ibid.

¹⁵³² In P. Kappert: *From Romanticisation*; op cit; p.39.

¹⁵³³ J. Esposito: *The Islamic Threat*; op cit; p. 169.

¹⁵³⁴ M.Jameelah: *Islam and Orientalism*; M.Y Khan and Sons; Lahore; 1990; p. 136.

Final Words on the uses of ‘Islamic Barbarism’: Demonise and Assault:

From Pope Urban’s depiction of Turkish horrors to justify the launching of the crusades (1095-1291), or the Church ranting about Muslim crimes in Spain to justify their extermination (16th-17th century), or the horrific Western accounts of Mamluk rule of Egypt to justify the invasion of Egypt (1798), or the Turkish and Algerian barbaric despotism and piracy to justify the invasion of Algeria (1830), or the Muslim ruler of India suffocating British subjects to justify the onslaught against him (late 18th century), and multiple other similar instances, Islamic violence and barbarism has always been the justification for attacks on Muslims, as abundantly shown already.

Today, there are no Turkish armies as in the Middle Ages to justify a crusading onslaught. Nor are there Muslim pirates threatening Western shipping to justify an invasion as was done in 1830 against Algeria. Thanks to technology it is no longer possible to use the murder of a Christian as a proof of Islamic murderous instincts to justify their elimination from Christian soil as was done in Spain in the 17th century. Or maybe it still is. Indeed, now there are no powerful Islamic armies, or pirates, or Turkish threat against the West, but there is ‘Muslim barbaric terror.’ And Islamic barbaric terror serves a multiplicity of purposes which are outlined herein.

Muslim barbaric terror, like Muslim piracy and Turkish atrocities of the past, is largely exaggerated, fanned by daily propaganda, although it must be said there are evil Muslims, haters of everybody, who will need to be tackled as murderers. Such propaganda still justifies military action against Muslims (besides, of course, darkening the perception of Islam.) Thus, picking on recent events, in late 2001, when the USA was struck by a terror campaign with anthrax, supposedly the work of Islamic terrorists, this was to prepare for war on ‘terror’ in Afghanistan. On this matter, the BBC even found links of anthrax terrorists with Iraq. Yet, this very BBC, in March 2002, accepted that an American CIA expert was the author of the anthrax campaign.¹⁵³⁵ Unrepentant, in another Panorama programme (9 February 03), the BBC

¹⁵³⁵ BBC; Newsnight; 14 March 2002; 10.30 pm; then all media May-June 2003.

insisted on the Iraqi links with terror to add to the justifications for the war on Iraq. Another BBC reporter, on a separate assignment in northern Iraq, even stumbled on a supposed chemical factory under the control of Islamic groups, hence proof of Islamic chemical terror in preparation. Once Iraq and the said building were bombed (March 03), it was proved that the building had no value of any sort. On 9 February 03, the British used 'an up-to-date dossier' to demonstrate Islamic terror with Iraqi links; and yet the report proved later to be a copy of a dissertation published nine years before, word by word, even, with the grammatical mistakes of one of the foreign authors being repeated. Then there was the 45-minute threat Iraq posed with its weapons of mass destruction, the biggest farce of recent times. Still it justified the war on Iraq in 2003.

Then we had the greatest modern terrorist, Abu Musa'ab Al-Zarqawi, in the city of Felloujah to justify its destruction and the mass killing of its population in November 2004. Zarqawi fled the city to reappear whenever and wherever a bombardment of a town or a city was needed. Then terror in that country is used to justify the mass arrests, disappearances, torture, extra judicial liquidations (the same as happened in many countries in previous decades), besides explaining bombings of civilian targets, killings of leading and intellectual figures, assassination of decent military officers, and the mass killings by death squads (also as happened in many countries).

As shown in previous chapters, dwelling on others' barbarism, such as Indian cannibalism in Central America, Indian savagery in Northern America, Muslim crimes in Spain, Muslims impaling Christian captives in North Africa, etc, serves to put the spotlight on such 'barbaric criminals,' while they themselves are mass slaughtered. Thus, we can see that, from Bosnia to Chechnya, from Palestine to Lebanon and Iraq, and also under the Westernised 'Muslim' dictatorships, whilst on the ground it is the Muslims who are slain in their hundreds of thousands, rhetoric bombards us with Islamic barbarism. Even in the instance of the destruction of Felloujah in November 04, in Western rhetoric it was only an 'excessive response' to abominable Muslim barbarism.¹⁵³⁶ The Red Cross on 20 November 04 equated Muslim barbaric butchering of four Western civilians with 'excessive' American actions in the city.¹⁵³⁷

¹⁵³⁶ See British Media reports and news of 20 November 04.

¹⁵³⁷ Representative of Red Cross to British television on 20 November 04 in news Bulletins.

‘Islamic barbarism and terror’ are formidable weapons that justify the arrest and incarceration without trial of thousands of Islamic activists, draining all the finance of active Muslim charities (on the grounds that such finance is aimed for terrorist purposes). The ‘Islamic barbarism’ rhetoric also highlights the blood-lust of the Muslim, the plight of his victims, and thus justifies his eradication; his eradicator, whoever it is, must therefore be only applying justice and retribution. Thus, in this respect, with the exception, for some reason, of one – Milosevic - every other slayer of Muslims has got away with praise.

‘Muslim terror’ is also the best means by which, literally, and systematically Islamic elites are wiped out through a most basic and yet highly effective method. Pseudo-Islamic terror groups (i.e. secret service death squads) are set up. These pseudo-terrorist groups create outrages, which both give practical instances of terror, and which justify governmental ‘Anti Terror Measures.’ In the cycle of ‘terror and counter terror,’ Muslim elites are exterminated; those amongst such Islamic elites with intellectual and religious standing or integrity are murdered by the ‘terrorists;’ whilst young Muslim activists are killed as terrorists.

Finally, whether sought or not, excessive propaganda about Islamic terror, together with the failure of some Islamic voices to condemn the killing of any innocent, or worse, even justifying them, has led to one crucial point: the certainty that the presence of Muslims in the West is that of an enemy within, threatening the safety of Western society. In previous times, when the same conclusion was reached it led to genocides: whether of Muslims in Spain 1609-1610, or in Bosnia 1992-5, or of the Jews at recurrent times in the West.

Conclusions

This author is no particular admirer of Professor Ferguson, the author and presenter of the recent program on Channel Four, *The War of the Worlds*.¹⁵³⁸ This author, however, is in full agreement with the professor on the particular future dangers threatening Muslim integration in the West. Fergusson notes that under certain conditions, even in what are seemingly highly civilised nations, terrible things might happen in the future, whereby whole civilised populations might act in the most brutal tribal fashion. As a rejoinder to his view, the Muslim presence in the Christian West has never been consummated. The Muslim presence in the West can be precarious and uncertain. True, Western society has been welcoming to Muslims, and has offered them vast opportunities to thrive and prosper. True, too, Western society, especially British, is fundamentally tolerant, decent, and abides by rules of humanity and respect for basic rights, which are of the highest order. Yet, under conditions of serious conflicts, exacerbated by outrages committed by individuals or groups acting in the name of Islam, whatever their motivations, a backlash with vastly horrific implications is not to be disregarded.

The gravity of any backlash, including mass killing of a different group, history has taught us is fundamentally always, fuelled by campaigns of demonisation. Without going too far in history, the experience of the Jews rounded up in ‘civilised’ countries, put in concentration camps, and killed en masse is there to testify to what happens when a group is turned into demons incarnate, inferiors, and painted as the enemy within. The demonisation of Islam and Muslims, as history and this work have shown, has always led to mass slaying of Muslims. The recent mass slaying of Muslims in Bosnia took place in the wake of such an exercise as to give it intellectual legitimacy. It took place in the midst of the West, and in the midst of general indifference of ‘civilised’ nations.

¹⁵³⁸ The War of Worlds; Mondays 8 p.m Channel Four; UK; June-July 06.

Whatever faith one has in the decency, generosity, and humanity of Westerners as people, nobody can read the future and confidently hold that there would never be a grave future scenario, which could induce people who see Muslims as threatening, barbaric fiends, to take action against them.

The final chapter of this work has also raised the other fundamental aim behind demonising one entity, and that is military invasion followed by mass slaying of its people. The case of Iraq is before us to show how lies and invented threats were enough to unleash a vast military onslaught on the country, and lead it into the chaos and mayhem that are resulting in the mass killings of tens of thousands of its people every year. The case of Iraq is absolutely symptomatic of all other instances of Western invasions of the Muslim lands for centuries, as history, and the preceding chapters have shown us. Never, indeed, has any Western invasion of any Muslim country been carried out without its noble aims stated first, i.e. to remove Islamic barbarism and enlighten Muslim society. Some invasions, such as that of Morocco by France in 1912, were even presented as aiming to protect such countries (military occupation was called protectorate). History also teaches us that never has one single Western invasion of Muslim lands resulted in anything other than mass slaying of its people and its mass looting. These repeated invasions and terrible outcomes upon Muslims have always relied upon, depended on, and been based upon the concept of Muslim barbarism. It is hence all too logical that whilst the concept of Muslim barbarism still thrives, the invasions and mass slayings of Muslims in their own lands will happen again and again.

The demonizing of Muslims and Islam is not just extremely dangerous, bloody, and criminal, it is fundamentally immoral and evil, on many grounds, as is summed up briefly here.

Firstly Islam and Muslims are not barbaric fiends, to the contrary, no faith has ever led in the fight for respect for human life, tolerance, equality and humanity as much as Islam, and history is there to testify. As Jameelah writes:

‘Despite all the imperfections which are inevitable in this imperfect world, traditional Muslim society, throughout the centuries of its ascendancy, was free from the curses of nationalism, imperialism, class conflicts, racial discrimination, inquisition, heresy hunts, routine torture of war and political prisoners, bloody sectarian strife... This phenomenon is no accident but a natural result of the implementation of the all-

embracing divine commandments of Islam which, enjoying until the very recent past, universal reverence, proclaims the rule of Law supreme, and leaves nobody, whether he be a believer or unbeliever, outside the scope of that Law.’¹⁵³⁹

Secondly, it is fundamentally dishonest to label Islam and its adherents as barbaric and inferiors when it is precisely Islam and Muslims who are the decisive reason for the thriving modern sciences and civilisation, and it is they who brought out the West from its barbarian night into light and civilisation. As Smith puts it:

‘The dark ages of Europe would have been doubly, nay trebly dark but for the Arabs who alone by their arts and sciences, by their agriculture, their philosophy, and their virtues, shone out amidst the universal gloom of ignorance and crime.’¹⁵⁴⁰

It is thirdly immoral for the hordes daily painting Islam as evil to do so, failing to realise, that all of us embracing that faith would have to be particularly depraved to believe in it. One does not believe in Islam out of depravity or foolishness, one does so because one believes in its fundamental goodness and humanity, and its unique legacy to history and civilisation.

Finally, even in the most deadly conflicts, when Muslims were slaughtered en masse by the crusaders, or under other circumstances, they never blamed all Christians, and they never used such murderous outrages to wipe out Christianity in their midst. It is, thus, abhorrent and evil to pick on the deeds of some individuals acting in the name of Islam, as they allege, to criminalise the whole Muslim nation and their faith.

It is these truths that anti-Islamic Western polemicists, blinded and blighted by ten centuries or so of rabid anti-Islamic propaganda, hysterically oppose, hardly able or willing to deviate from their rhetoric of hate, despite all fallacies and dangers to us all.

It is also these truths, which Muslim elites, inept and illiterate in their majority, have failed to defend, stand by, and convey. In the midst of their criminal incompetence and corruption, little do they see that from demonisation to mass culling is a small step indeed. History has shown this repeatedly.

Surely the time has arrived for the West to disregard its millennium-old tradition of fear and paranoia of the Muslim subject, and see the

¹⁵³⁹ M. Jameelah: *Islam and Orientalism*; M.Y.Khan and Sons; (Lahore; 1990); pp. 49-50

¹⁵⁴⁰ R.B. Smith: *Mohammed*; op cit; pp. 125-6; and 217.

Conclusions

Muslims as people who can be lived with side by side, neighbours with their differences rather than alien, dangerous foes.

Searching for and establishing the common good for all of us on a small earth, with our diversity, will surely result in greater collective power and prosperity in the vast universe.

In the place of strife, it is harmonious co-existence, and how to build it, which require the focus of the enlightened and the good.

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The cultural, scientific and economic achievements of Islamic Civilisation over the last 1400 years could be a great inspiration to humanity today. Unfortunately, for centuries, the impact of Islamic Civilisation has been obscured and its appeal has been countered by the creation and repetition of the myth of the Barbaric Muslim.

From the Pope's imaginative justifications for the first crusade in 1095 down to the untouchable death squads roaming US occupied Iraq in 2007, the myth has been told and retold and it has convinced many of the great threat of Muslim fundamentalism, terrorism, extremism, fanaticism, irrationality etc.

As the threat gets magnified, ever more violent measures become justified as necessary to eliminate it - up to and including genocide itself. Wars and sanctions that have killed millions of Muslims have been justified with many pretexts that turned out to be untrue, but the main false pretext is the myth of Muslim barbarism.

In this book, S. E. Al-Djazairi complements his substantial works on Islamic Civilisation by detailing the nature of this myth, how it was built through the ages and what forms it takes today. He demonstrates the fallacies at the heart of each of its aspects including the charges of intolerance, oppression of women, slave trading, cruelty to captives, Muslim inferiority etc., After refuting these claims he shows the real aims of those who propagate and benefit from them.

Cover Pictures:

On the left - A painting by Henri Regnault: *Exécution sans jugement sous les rois maures de Grenade* (Execution Without Trial Under the Rule of the Moorish Kings in Granada), 1870 - in Musée d'Orsay Paris

On the right - A photograph of hundreds of coffins of Muslims killed at the massacre in the 'UN Safe-zone' of Srebrenica in 1995 and later found in mass graves. Part of the estimated 250,000 Bosnian Muslims "ethnically cleansed" from Europe.

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